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Public discourse: Systemic functional analysis of Trump's and Biden's inaugural speeches

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Abstract

This study critically analyzes the inaugural speeches of President Trump and President Biden using Critical Discourse Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics. The study focuses on transitivity, modality, and texture to identify the political purposes of the two speeches and how language serves ideology and power. Concerning transitivity, the analysis of the ideational function reveals Trump's usage of 'material process' to portray himself as the 'actor' and the 'doer' with clear 'goals' (a strong leader) and Biden's usage of 'relational process', 'material process' and 'mental process' to communicate vision, simplify abstract concepts and gain trust. Concerning modality, the investigation of the interpersonal function exposes that as Trump communicated his goals, vision, and manifesto directly through medium certainty and the future indicator 'will', Biden used high, medium, and low certainty modals to reflect on his vision, entrust the public and generate hope. Even though the structural perspective of low modality in Biden's speech may suggest weak leadership and lack of confidence, the functional analysis reveals Biden's fatherly-like approach to uplift morale and generate trust. The investigation of the thematic development and lexical cohesion in both speeches reveals Trump's focus on concrete concepts (i.e., jobs, wealth, borders) and Biden's focus on abstract concepts and American values (i.e., unity, democracy, racial justice). The textual analysis also demonstrates how ideologies are communicated through the usage of multiple synonymous references, excessive repetitions, and the conceptual use of '*we*' and '*others*'.

Keywords: Public discourse; Ideational metafunction; Interpersonal metafunction; Textual metafunction; systemic functional linguistics; Inaugural speeches

1. Introduction

Inaugural speeches in the US are delivered by presidents after taking the presidential oath of office. Presidents take this opportunity to address the nation and introduce their vision and goals. These speeches, in times, also serve the purpose of uniting the USA especially after troubled periods or conflicts in times. Inaugural speeches are usually watched by millions of people in the US as they are also watched by millions of people abroad to get a glimpse of the new president's vision to the world. This was the case with the overwhelming majority of previously delivered inaugural speeches as was

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the case with the inaugural speeches of the 45th and the 46th presidents. However, the last two presidents had major personal and political issues with their predecessors and their visions of the country and this was reflected in their inaugural speeches.

Neither President Trump nor President Biden has good terms with their predecessors in the White House. For Trump, Obama was an immigrant who took years to provide a birth certificate (later on he admitted that President Obama is born in the US). He is, according to Trump, the most ignorant American president in history. Trump also claimed that Obama is a disaster and that he is the founder of ISIS. For Bidon, Trump was not fit to be the president of the United States. Trump, according to Biden, will go down to history as one of the most irresponsible Presidents as he has been an embarrassment to the country (the US). They (Trump and Biden) were not in good terms up to a stage that Trump decided to skip the inauguration of Biden and Biden describes Trump’s decision to skip the inauguration as 'a good thing'. Having the above in mind, this paper critically analyses the inaugural speeches of Trump and Biden using Systematic Functional Linguistics with a focus on modality and transitivity to learn the political purposes of the two speeches and how language serves ideology and power.

Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is the backbone of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Van Dijk (1993, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2001) viewed CDA as a field that studies and analyses written and spoken texts in social, cultural, historical, or political contexts to highlight discursive features such as dominance, ideology, power, bias, and inequality. CDA is not a simple discipline or narrowly defined theory; it is not a homogeneous method, nor school or a paradigm, but at most a shared perspective on doing linguistic, semiotic, or discourse analysis. It shares the methods of linguistics and discourse analysis, but it differs from them in being critical. It implied different methods and approaches to study text and talk, and one of these is critical linguistics. In critically analyzing a communicative event, Fairclough (1998, 1992, 1995) drew attention to three analytical hubs that are the text, the discourse practice, and intertextuality. To carry the textual analysis, Fairclough (1993, 1995, 2003, 2005) made use of Halliday’s (1985) SFL. For Halliday (1985), SFL is based on functional grammar as it opposes “formal grammar”. It is functional as it intends to interpret the texts, the system, and the linguistic structures. It is systemic as the structures that people tend to use in certain recurrent situations are systematic. This study makes use of SFL to critically and functionally examine the structures used by both presidents in their inaugural speeches to find out more about the political purposes of their speeches and how language is used to communicate ideology and power.

2. Literature Review

The SFL or the ‘Sydney School’ is based on Halliday’s systemic functional grammar (SFG) approach. Halliday (1985) viewed grammar from a functional point of view. He also viewed the “components of meaning” as functional. He illustrated that languages are systematized around two types of meanings that are the “ideational”, which represent experience (Martin and Rose, 2003) and the “interpersonal”, which is the component to enact relationships (Martin and Rose, 2003). As such, the ideational component is concerned with our use of grammar and grammatical resources to interpret our experience of the world around us and inside us (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004; Matthiessen & Halliday, 1997). The interpersonal component, however, is concerned with the relationship between the communicators. It is the “grammatical resources for enacting social roles” (Matthiessen & Halliday, 1997, p. 12).

In addition to these two components, Halliday (1985) added another component that is the “textual”, which “breathes relevance into the other two”. The textual component, then, is concerned with the presentation of the other two components as a text (Matthiessen & Halliday, 1997). Halliday

(1985) called these three components of meanings "metafunctions". According to Marin and Rose (2003), these three functions or metafunctions of language are "interwoven with each other" (p. 6). Therefore, researchers may examine any discourse from any of these three components to identify the functions carried out by the different patterns of meaning (p.7).

According to Halliday (1985), the main intention of this approach is to examine the "meaning as a choice". For him, the meanings that are carried out in any "semiotic system" can be interpreted as a "network of interlocking options". He argued that language, as a socializing system, is used to achieve meaning in what he called the "context of situation". The context of situation, according to Halliday, reoccurs as "situation types". Therefore, the users of any semiotic system create typified options that they use when they face the same context of situation. As such, these typified options become conventional in any similar context of situation and create what Halliday called the "semantic configurations" or the register.

Halliday and Hasan (1989, p. 39) view register as a "configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, tenor, and mode". In this sense, the field refers to the social action that is taking place between participants, the tenor refers to the participants who are taking part in the social action, their role and status and the mode refers to the function[s] of language in that given context (Halliday and Hasan, 1985). Taking workplace emails, for example, if an employee sent a goal-oriented email to a colleague, the field is the knowledge that the writer has about writing such an email in the workplace (AlAfnan, 2018, 2021a). The tenor is the status and role played by the sender and the recipient[s] in the institution. The mode, however, is how the participant used the channel of communication, which is a computer-mediated written channel in this context, to achieve his goals (AlAfnan, 2015, 2021b).

Initially, the focus of SFL was on identifying the register of correspondence to help students "learn to exercise the appropriate linguistic choices relevant to the needs, functions or meanings at any time" (Christie, 1987, p.24). This focus was extended to include written and oral workplace communication (AlAfnan, 2018), mass media communication (AlAfnan, 2019, 2020), and political discourse.

3. Methodology

This study critically analyzes and compares the Inaugural Speech of President Donald Trump[2], the 45th American President, and the Inaugural Speech of Josef Biden[3], the 46th American President, to identify the political purposes of the two speeches and how language serves ideology and power.

To critically analyze the two speeches, Halliday's (1985) SFL and SFG components of meaning or metafunctions (the Ideational Function, the Interpersonal Function, and the Textual Function) were examined. To examine and analyze the field or the ideational metafunction, the use of verbs is examined and analyzed. To examine and analyze the interpersonal metafunction or the tenor, the communicative role (i.e., informing, persuading, questioning, greeting) the speaker adapted through the use of modal verbs and their functions is examined and analyzed. To examine the textual metafunction and the mode, thematic development (cohesive devices) and lexical cohesion (synonyms and repetition) (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004) are examined and analyzed.

The examination of these linguistic resources includes the use and the meaning or the function of the use in the given context of situation. However, I start by providing some general insights into the two inaugural speeches.

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[2] **Inaugural speech of President Trump:** https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/full-text-president-donald-trumps-inauguration speech/story?id=44915821

[3] **Inaugural speech of President Biden:** https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/01/20/inaugural-address-by-president-joseph-r-biden-jr

4. Insights into the Two Inaugural Speeches

President Donald Trump delivered his inaugural address as the 45th President of the United States on Friday, the 20th of January, 2017. It is estimated that 300.000 to 600.000 people attended the public ceremony (Bump, 2017). The total number of words of the speech is 1660 words. The speech was delivered in 16 minutes and 20 seconds. The speech had 98 sentences and the average number of words per sentence is 16.9 words. The most common noun that was repeated in the speech is 'America' (19 times (percentage 1.3058)). The most common action verb repeated in the speech is 'make' (5 times (percentage 0.3436)) and the most common modal verb repeated in the speech is 'will' (42 times (percentage 2.8866)). The lexical density of the speech is 37.1821. President Trump started the speech by thanking the Chief Justice Roberts, President Carter, President Clinton, President Bush, President Obama, fellow Americans, and people of the world and concluded the speech thanking his audience.

President Josef Biden delivered his inaugural address as the 46th President of the United States on Wednesday, the 20th of January, 2021. Because of the current pandemic, the general audience was not allowed to attend the inauguration ceremony. Three previous presidents (Trump did not attend the inauguration as he decided to skip it) and several congressional leaders and senators also attended the ceremony. There was a security presence during the inauguration because of security fears that pro-Trump rioters would return to Washington on Inauguration Day. The speech was 2371 words long and it had 202 sentences. The average number of words per sentence is 11.7 words. The speech was delivered in 21 minutes and 10 seconds. The most common noun that was repeated in the speech is 'America' (20 times (percentage 0.8288)). The most common verb repeated in the speech is 'know' (5 times (percentage 0.3315)) and the most common modal verb repeated in the speech is 'will' (33 times (percentage 1.3676)). The lexical density of the speech is 30.2114. President Biden started the speech addressing Chief Justice Roberts, Vice President Harris, Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Vice President Pence, distinguished guests, and my fellow Americans and concluded the speech thanking America.

Table 1. Overview of Trump's and Biden's inaugural speeches

Speech / Component	President Trump's Speech		President Biden's Speech	
Duration	16 minutes 20 seconds		21 minutes and 10 seconds	
Number of words	1660		2371	
Number of sentences	98		202	
Average No. of words per sentence	16.9		11.7	
Most common noun	America	19 times (1.3058%)	America	20 times (0.3315%)
Most common verb	Make	5 times (0.3436%)	Know	8 times (0.8304%)
Most common auxiliary verb	Will	42 times (2.8866%)	Will	33 times (1.3676%)
Lexical density	37.1821		30.2114	

As the table above shows, even though Biden's speech is longer in terms of duration, number of words, and number of sentences than Trump's speech, Trump's speech has a higher lexical density than Biden's speech. The linguistic complexity in Trump's speech can also be noticed through the average number of words per sentence. As shown above, in an average, Trump's sentences are around 5 words longer than Biden's sentences. As American inaugural speeches target the American public and international audiences, it can be argued that Biden's relatively low lexical density is intended to allow the American public and international observers to have a fuller understanding of the speech.

The table above also shows that the target audience of both Presidents is America and Americans. America was the most common noun in both speeches, but even though Trump used the noun one time lesser than Biden, the percentage of using the name/noun (America) in Trump's speech is higher (3 times higher) than Biden's speech. This reflects Trump's intensive focus on internal (American) issues and communicating to the American public in his inaugural address.

The table above also shows that the most common verb used in Trump's speech is 'make' (5 times) and the most common verb used in Biden's speech is 'know' (8 times). The usage of 'make' reflects an action-based approach in communicating to 'American' and eventually an action-based approach governing the country. That is, President Trump introduced himself as being an action-oriented president. The usage of 'know', which is a mental-state verb, in Biden's speech, however, reflects understanding. 'Know' in Biden's speech is an assurance to the Americans that the President belongs to them, unlike Trump who eats KFC in his private jet using a fork and knife (On the 2nd of August, 2016, President Trump twitted a picture of himself eating KFC fried Chicken with a knife and fork). Biden wanted to emphasize that he 'knows' as he was neither isolated from the Americans in his personal tower nor golf resorts. As such, Trump introduced himself as a strong leader who is action-oriented while Biden introduced himself as a person from the neighborhood who understands the needs of the people.

In terms of modal verbs, it is apparent that 'will' is the most common modal verb in both speeches as it was repeated 42 times by President Trump and 33 times by President Biden. The intensive usage of 'will' in inaugural speeches is expected as the new president formally introduces his goals, vision, and manifesto to the nation and the world. The 'will+action verb' in inaugural speeches are considered promises that people will look forward to achieve. As President Trump used the modal 'will' 42 times, which is equivalent to 2.8866% of the overall speech count (President Biden used 'will' 33 times which is equivalent to 1.3676% of his speech's word count), it is apparent that President Trump provided more promises to the nation and the world. The fulfillment of some of these promises is questionable, at least for President Biden. For example, President Trump promised in his inaugural speech that "we will reinforce old alliances and form new ones". Four years later, President Biden, in his inaugural speech, semi-directly announced that old alliances were wrecked and that we, President Biden and his administration, "will repair our [American] alliances and engage with the world once again". As we cannot verify the fulfillment of President Biden's promises at this stage, we will need to wait until the end of his term to analyze.

5. Ideational Metafunction-Transitivity Analysis

According to Halliday (1994), every single situation is made up of processes. These processes include the participants (the nominal groups involved in the process), the process itself (which is represented by a verb), and the circumstances that are associated with the process. We have, according to Halliday (1994), three major processes that mental, material, and relational processes and three minor processes that are behavioral, verbal, and existential processes. The focus of this study is on the three major processes. Material Process has an actor and a goal. The mental process is grouped into four subtypes that are perception, cognition, affection, and desire. Relational process is carried out inside and outside human beings and associated with the use of the verb to be and some other verbs like seem, appear and own.

Table 2. Transitivity in Trump's and Biden's inaugural speeches

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Speech</th><th>Total number</th><th>Material processes</th><th>Mental process</th><th>Relational processes</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Trump's speech</td><td>No.</td><td>124</td><td>73</td><td>9</td><td>42</td></tr>
<tr><td>%</td><td>100%</td><td>58.87%</td><td>7.25%</td><td>19.35%</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Biden's Speech</td><td>No.</td><td>148</td><td>51</td><td>30</td><td>67</td></tr>
<tr><td>%</td><td>100%</td><td>34.45%</td><td>20.27%</td><td>45.27%</td></tr>
</table>

Examining President Trump's inaugural address reveals that Trump's inaugural speech has included more material processes (58.87%) than mental (7.25%) and relational (19.35%) processes. On the other hand, Biden's speech included more relational processes (45.27%) than material (34.45%) and mental (20.27%) processes.

5.1. Transitivity in Trump's Speech

Material process is a good option to establish confidence in the new administration. It is a direct and straightforward method to communicate to the public who the actors will be, what are the intended processes and what are the intended goals. For the actor part, Trump used the first-person plural inclusive pronoun 'we' quite intensively to give the impression to the American people that they will be the actors who are setting in the driving seat to govern the country. He made this reference explicitly in the speech as he said "our government is controlled by the people". The inclusiveness is also noticed in the repetitive usage of "our government", "our country", and "Americans" as the actors in the material processes. In terms of goals, Trump highlighted safeguarding the borders, increasing the wealth of the people, and creating/bring back jobs. The selection of these process is systematically carried out as they were foregrounded in most of his speeches during the campaign period. The goals were intended to be achieved through "making America great again", "controlling the borders", and "protecting the people".

Table 3. Transitivity analysis of Trump's inaugural speech (Material Process)

Actor	**Process**	**Goal**
I/we/you/ Americans/ our government/our country/ a new nation	Bring/Face/make/protect/control/reap/want/bring/ send/salute/seek/reinforce	Jobs/Politicians/the great men/ old alliances/friendship/ Borders/wealth/loyalty

In addition to material process, it is also noticed that President Trump also used relational process 42 instances, which communicates to 19.35%. The relational process is an effective method to communicate to the audience the beliefs of the speaker, in this context, the president. It is a method to establish a relationship between the status quo and the stand of the president. In his inaugural speech, President Trump used the relational process to emphasize unity as in "when America is united, America is totally unstoppable". He also used the relational process to assure the audience that he is an action-oriented person (i.e., empty talk is over) and to give a sense of pride to the American public (i.e., this moment is your moment).

The mental process was not very popular in Trump's speech as it was merely used in 7.25%. In the 9 instances of the mental process, Trump tried to give people a sense of pride as in this day "will be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of this nation again". Trump also used the mental process to encourage people to work harder as in "In America, we understand that a nation is only living as long as it is striving".

5.2. Transitivity in Biden's Speech

As shown in table 2 above, Biden used a mix of relational, material, and mental processes in his inaugural speech. The highest percentage is linked to the relational processes (45.27%). By focusing on the relational processes, Biden tried to establish a connection between himself and the American public. He also tried to communicate his beliefs and convince the audience with his stand to encourage the belief in him, believe in their ideologies and belief in their country (i.e., This is America's day. This is democracy's day). But he also used relational processes to directly and straightforwardly explain some abstract elements in simple and direct sentences (i.e., Democracy is fragile). As shown in table 1, the lexicon complexity of Biden's speech is relatively low. His sentences are mainly simple and he did not use abstract/technical words. He wanted to talk to all Americans- the young and the old, the educated and the uneducated, the native speakers and the immigrants. He wanted to simplify the abstract concepts and establish rapport with everyone and make every single American believe in the country and feel responsible as some irresponsible acts may lead to a lot of damage. The relational processes help in achieving this goal.

Table 4. Transitivity analysis of Biden's inaugural speech (Material Process)

Actor	Process	Goal
We/I/ Americans/ citizen /leaders	Celebrate/thank/ask/put/teach/overcome/ deliver/make/know/understand/repair /honor/face/meet/defend	Triumph/predecessors/every American/people/children/deadly virus/social justice/America/forces/jobs/families Alliances/ mothers and fathers/husbands and wives/sons and daughters/friends/neighbors/co-workers.

The usage of the material process was also popular in Biden's speech as it was used 51 times. Biden nominated several actors in his inaugural speech; however, it is noticed that the main reference was the first-person singular pronoun 'I' and the first person plural inclusive 'we'. The usage of these personal pronouns as actors in this speech depended on the context of usage. Biden strived to introduce himself as a strong president who can act independently. He is not the shadow of Obama. He will be able to 'defend', 'face', 'meet', 'repair', 'make', 'deliver' and 'overcome' independently. He is also connected to the people and know and understand what they face. Biden strived to establish credibility as a strong leader. However, he also emphasized that he cannot be the only actor. He needs all Americans and citizens to stand by his side and put their belief in him if they want to achieve his and their goals to relating to their 'children', 'families', 'mothers', 'wives', 'husbands', 'neighbors', 'fathers', 'friends' and 'alliances'. Material process in Biden's speech intended to establish confidence in his leadership and gather support to his stand and policies in the years to come.

The usage of mental processes in Biden’s speech is less popular than the usage of the other two processes but more popular than its usage in Trump’s speech. The mental process in Biden’s speech intended to introduce himself as a person who is close to the public and ‘know’ their needs and wants. This is reflected in the repetitive usage of ‘know’ which is also the most popular verb used by Biden in the speech (i.e., I know speaking of unity, I know the forces, I also know they are not new). Biden wanted to give the impression that he on top of the job. Mental processes were also used by Biden to spread ‘hope’, ‘understanding’, and ‘believe’ in the country, its future, and its ability to overcome all obstacles.

6. Interpersonal Metafunction-Modality Analysis

The examination of the interpersonal metafunction is carried by analyzing the usage of modality in the two inaugural speeches. The usage of modal verbs can reflect low, medium, and high certainty/uncertainty. The degree of certainty can be presented in its positive or negative nature. For example, can, may, could, and might represent low certainty and high degree of uncertainty, which is not expected from a sitting president. The usage of will would, shall, and should represent medium politeness as the degree of certainty and uncertainty are relatively similar. The usage of must, have to, ought to represent high certainty as the degree of uncertainty is low, which is expected from a sitting president. Investigating the usage of modal verbs in the two inaugural speeches reveals that intensive usage of modal verbs in the two speeches.

Table 5. Modality analysis of Trump’s and Biden’s Inaugural speeches

Speeches	Total number	Low certainty (can, could, may, might)	Medium certainty (will, would, shall, should)	High certainty (must, ought to, have to, had to)
Trump’s speech	47	1	43	3
	3.51%	2.12%	91.48%	6.38%
Biden’s speech	68	20	37	11
	3.48%	29.41%	54.41%	16.17%

As shown in table 5, Trump used 47 modal verbs in his 1660 words inaugural speech, which is equivalent to 3.51% of the overall word count, while Biden used 68 modal verbs in his 2371 words inaugural speech, which is equivalent to 3.48% of the overall word count. The averages of using modal verbs in both speeches are almost identical. However, it is noticed that we have a huge difference in the types of modal verbs used in both speeches.

In Trump’s inquartation speech, the usage of the medium certainty modal verbs by far is the highest among all other modal types used. Among the medium type modal verbs, the modal verb ‘will’ is the most popular as it was used in 42 out of the 43 occurrences. That is, the average of using ‘will’ in Trump’s speech is 97.67% of the medium certainty modal verbs usage and 89/36% of the overall modal verbs usage. Even though the usage of ‘will’ reflects medium certainty, it does not necessarily mean that the levels of certainty and uncertainty are almost even. The usage of ‘will+infinitive’ indicates future tenses which is adequate in this context (inaugural speeches context). As the new president addresses the nation and the world, he would be outlining his goals, vision, and manifesto, and the most direct and straightforward method to do it is the usage of future forms. The usage of ‘will’ in this context reflects promises. As President Trump says ‘new vision will govern this land’, observers and listeners do not take this as a mere willingness to do it, but as a manifesto promise that it will happen in the future. In addition to ‘will’, President Trump used the high certainty modal verb ‘must’ in three occurrences concerning protecting the borders, speaking freely, and thinking big. Two out of the three occurrences relate to American values (freedom of speech and believing that America is the land of achieving dreams) and the third occurrence relates to a major hardcore manifesto promise in Trump’s election campaign relating to immigration. The usage of ‘must’ in ‘we must protect our borders’ is a reassurance to the voters who voted him to office that he is going to build the ‘huge wall’ between the US and Mexico and stop illegal immigration. The usage of low certainty modal verbs was apparent in one occurrence, but the linguistic usage was more of an assurance and lessening possibilities than introducing possibilities. The usage of ‘can’ in ‘no challenge can match the heart and fight and spirit of America’ belittles possibilities up to a stage of diminishing them. As such, the usage of modal verbs in Trump’s speech portrayed the president as a president with a clear vision and goal who strongly stands by the American values and his promises to the people.

In Biden’s inaugural speech, the usage of medium certainty is the highest in numbers and percentage, but the usage of low certainty and high certainty was noticeably present. The usage of medium certainty was mainly represented by the usage of ‘will’ (34 out of 35 medium certainty occurrences) to introduce future policies and present goals and vision. The conspicuous usage of low modality is signified by ‘can’ (16 occurrences), ‘could’ (1 occurrence), ‘may’ (2 occurrences), and ‘might’ (1 occurrence). In critical linguistics terms, the usage of low modality in a presidential address may reflect a lack of big confidence in the abilities or possibilities of achieving a goal or a vision. It may also reflect reducing the sealing of expectations from the addresser. That is, the usage of low modality gives more space to the ‘actor’ to achieve the ‘goal’. For example, the usage of ‘can’ in ‘we can overcome this deadly virus’ and ‘we can deliver social justice’ does not reflect strong belief, confidence, and assurance from the actor’s side (we-the president, his administration, and the American public) to achieve the goals (social justice, overcoming the deadly virus). Even though it might be argued that the challenges that are faced in relation to ‘social justice (i.e., Black Lives Matter) and facing COVID19’ (i.e., the US fatality rate because of COVID is the highest in the world) are huge, but it is expected from the president to provide assurances to increase the morale of the public in facing the challenges. The usage of ‘can’ in this context could have been replaced by ‘must’ or ‘have to’ to reflect a strong and stern stand on the two challenges. This could have been carried out as in ‘we must reject a culture in which facts themselves are manipulated and even manufactured’, which reflects a strong stand and belief. The usage of modal verbs in Biden’s speech reflects a balanced and mixed personality. It portrays the president as a person of vision when he outlined his goals and concerned when giving guidance. However, the usage of low modality about some challenges did not provide enough evidence that he, as the actor, is confident and strong in achieving the goals.

7. Textual Metafunction-Texture

The textual metafunction denotes that language has devices that can make the text (written and spoken) a coherent and integrated structure. These devices or mechanisms include, but not limited to, referencing and repetitions, ellipsis, and substitution. In this study, we will focus on lexical cohesion concerning repetitions and synonyms and thematic development to the usage of cohesive devices.

Table 6. Cohesive devices and synonyms in Trump’s and Biden’s inaugural speeches

Speeches	Cohesive devices			Synonyms
Trump’s speech	And	84 times	83.1%	Americans-Citizens of America- the people- the citizens- the men and women of our country- a righteous public
	But	14 times	13.8%	
	Because	2 times	1.98%	
	However	1 time	0.99%	

				America-our country-your country- the United States of America-our wonderful nation The government-the establishment The world-other countries-other nations-foreign capitals-the nations of the world Our military-our great men and women-our soldiers
Biden's speech	And	92 times	81.4%	Americans- the people- my friends-great people-our people- America- great nation-our nation- the country-the leading force-the United States of America- our Republic The virus-the deadly virus-the raging virus
	But	16 times	14.1%	
	Yet	3 times	2.65%	
	Also	1 time	0.88%	
	Because	1 time	0.88%	

Investigating the thematic development of both speeches reveals a similar approach in constructing the speeches. Both speakers made sure that they build up sentences in a straight forward manner where the usage of 'and' as a cohesive device is the most common. Given that the speeches are delivered to a wide range of viewers, the speakers decided to add information to the theme of the sentence without complicating the structure of sentences with functional connectors or cohesive devices. As speakers needed to provide contrasting opinions in times (14.79% for Trump (13.8% for 'but' and 0.99% for 'however') and 16/75% for Biden (14.1% for 'but' and 2.65% for 'yet')), they selected to use the commonly used and understood 'but'. Even though Trump used 'however' in a single instance and Biden used 'yet' three times, this does not reflect the common practice of providing contrasting opinions using 'but'. As mentioned above, both presidents opted for clarity and simplicity in building the relationship between the clauses and sentences to build the thematic development of their speeches.

Concerning lexical cohesion, as table 6 shows, both presidents used several synonyms to build cohesion in their speeches. President Trump referred to the Americans using six synonymous terms that are 'Americans', 'the citizens of America', 'the people', 'the citizens', 'the men and women of our country', and 'a righteous public'. He also used 5 synonymous terms to refer to America that include 'America', 'our country', 'your country', 'the United States of America', and 'our wonderful nation'. Trump also referred to the world using five terms that 'the world', 'other countries', 'other nations', 'foreign capitals', and 'the nations of the world'. Examining the word choice in the three sets of synonyms above reveals how President Trump draws a line between America and the rest of the world. America and Americans are addressed passionately using the possessive pronoun 'our' which indicates the sense of belonging. The 'rest of the world' is viewed as the 'other' or the 'foreign', which indicates distancing. This explicates the ideology behind a number of Trump decisions that are unfavorably viewed by the rest of the world (i.e., withdrawing from Paris agreement).

Table 6 also shows that President Biden used several synonyms to refer to 'America', 'American', and 'the virus'. America for president Biden is 'great nation', 'our nation', 'the country', 'the leading force', 'the United States of America', and 'the republic'. The Americans are 'the people', 'my friends', 'great people' and 'our people'. Biden used the same passionate and intimate method to refer to America and the American, but, unlike Trump, he always referred to the rest of the world as the 'the world', which is a neutral term. 'The world', in Biden's speech, was repeated eight times two of which refer to "World War II' and the remaining six ensuring the Americans and international observers that the US will 'engage with the world once again'. This, on the contrary to messages communicated in Trump's inaugural speech, indicates that Biden views America as an integral part of the world, which explains the ideology behind several Biden decisions such as rejoining the World Health Organization and the Paris Agreement.

Figure 1. Word cloud of President Trump's inaugural speech

In addition to the usage of synonyms in both speeches, the usage of repetition also created lexical cohesion. As figure 1 shows, President Trump mainly repeated words and phrases like 'country' (12 times), 'nation' (13 times), 'people' (10 times), 'dream' (6 times). He also repeated a big number of phrases to create this lexical cohesion. The repetition of certain words or phrases in a speech does create a lexical cohesion between the different parts of the speech as they also indicate the main focus and the main theme of the speech. The nature of repetitive words reveals that Trump's speech was directed to the 'people' and the 'country'. The nature of the most commonly repeated words in Trump's speech reveals that he mainly focused on concrete concepts (i.e., jobs, wealth, borders) concerning the public (i.e., people, the nation).

Figure 2. Word cloud of President Biden's inaugural speech

Examining the inaugural speech of Biden also shows that he established lexical cohesion through the use of repetition. Biden repeated words and phrases like 'democracy', 'nation', 'unity', 'people', 'children', 'racial justice', and 'American story'. He also repeated a long list of words as it is shown in the word cloud above. The repetitive usage of these words created lexical cohesion as the main theme of the speech was based on 'uniting' the 'nation' after the division of election, uplifting the belief in 'democracy' after the rioting in the capital, and securing a better tomorrow for the 'people' and the 'children' as the world faces a 'climate crisis'. The nature of the most commonly repeated words in Biden's speech reveals that he mainly focused on abstract concepts and American values (i.e., unity, democracy) concerning the public (i.e., children, people, the nation).

8. Conclusion

This study examines transitivity, modality, and texture in the inaugural speeches of Trump and Biden. The examination of transitivity is carried out using the ideational metafiction of SFL, modality is examined using the interpersonal metafunction of SFL, and texture is examined in reference to the textual metafunction in SFL. The analysis revealed that even though both presidents strived to use simple and direct language to communicate to the public, Trump's speech was more lexically dense than Biden's speech. Both presidents communicated their goals, vision and introduced their manifesto to the nation and the world.

About transitivity, the analysis revealed that both presidents used the three major processes in the ideational metafunction (material process, mental process, and relational processes). However, it is obvious that President Trump mainly used the material process which emphasizes the 'doing'. This indicates that Trump was clear in presenting his vision in terms of actor (the doer), the goal (the target), and the process. On the other hand, President Biden mainly used the relational process, which designates the 'being'. Biden used the relational process to simplify the abstract concepts he talked about in his speech and to avoid using technical words that might not be understood by the common public. He wanted to be understood by all Americans and this was also reflected in the relatively low lexical density of his speech.

In reference to modality or the interpersonal metafunction, both presidents used low, medium, and high certainty modal verbs. However, it is noticed that Trump mainly used medium certainty modals, especially ‘will’ to communicate his political manifesto. The analysis revealed that the usage of ‘will’ in Trump’s speech does not reflect certainty/uncertainty as much as it communicates promises to the American public. This adds to the impression of being a ‘doer’ and an ‘actor’, which reflects strong and clear-lined leadership. The usage of modality in Biden’s speech, however, reveals a mixed-use of low, medium, and high modality. The usage of future form (medium certainty) is expected in inaugural speeches; however, the intensive usage of low modality is unexpected from a sitting president. This generates an impression of a weak leadership that lacks confidence in achieving goals and strives.

About texture or the textual metafunction, the textual analyses on lexical cohesion and thematic development revealed that both presidents delivered well-structured and cohesive speeches. The cohesive devices were mainly used to create a straight forward relationship between the clauses and the sentences. The two presidents did not want to complicate the linguistics structures to avoid confusion. The investigation on the lexical cohesion revealed the themes of the two speeches and the ideology of the two presidents. For Trump, the nature of repetitive words reveals that he mainly focused on concrete concepts (i.e., jobs, wealth, borders) concerning the Americans (i.e., the people, the nation). He viewed the rest of the world as ‘others’, which gives insights into the ideology behind leaving World Health Organization (WHO) and Paris Agreement. For Biden, the nature of the most commonly repeated words reveals that he mainly focused on abstract concepts and American values (i.e., unity, democracy) concerning the public (i.e., children, people, the nation). He viewed the world as ‘the world’ that America is an integral part of. This also gives us insights into the ideology behind a number of his decisions such as rejoining the WHO and Paris Agreement.

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The use of PowerPoint in developing multimedia-based teaching and learning materials for learning Arabic Language

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Abstract

Microsoft PowerPoint was one of the Microsoft Office applications developed by Microsoft since 1990 and has been used widely for disseminating information and presenting reports. PowerPoints are normally produced in slides to be projected on the screen or whiteboard for the audience to see. However, the strengths of PowerPoint go beyond slide presentation. This study aims to discuss the role of PowerPoint in the teaching and learning besides identifying its usage in the development of a multimedia-based module. Interviews were conducted with four respondents who have used the PowerPoint-based module learning material. The respondents are students from Sultan Zainal Abidin University who enrolled in Arabic for beginner course. Feedbacks from students are evaluated to determine whether or not the PowerPoint-based module enhances their understanding in their learning. Despite its presence, not all educators take advantage of the benefits offered by PowerPoint which go beyond a static presentation to include elements of text, picture, graphic, animation and audio. The findings from this study indicate that materials produced by PowerPoint help enhance learner understanding. Therefore, its huge potentials can be explored further to produce multimedia-based teaching and learning materials.

Keywords: PowerPoint; multimedia; teaching and learning; Arabic language; learner understanding

1. Introduction

The teaching and learning process has undergone rapid changes due to the technological advancement. Hence various teaching and learning materials are produced using available applications in the Microsoft Office. Millions of users of the Microsoft Office have benefitted from its application for documents, multimedia materials and statistics. In addition to Word, Excel and One Note, there is PowerPoint which was developed by Dennis Austin and Bob Gaskins and formerly used by Forethought Inc. PowerPoint has become one of the most utilised applications besides Word and Excel (Hermawan, 2019). PowerPoint is normally used as a tool for slide presentation even though its usage can be further explored. The program is attractive, user friendly and convenient for use in teaching and learning (Suratman, 2009).

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1.1. Research questions

This study aimed to obtain initial feedback from students on Arabic language materials developed using power point. The research question is:

a. How is Arabic language material developed using power point?
b. What is the usability of Arabic language materials developed using powerpoint?

2. Functions of PowerPoint

PowerPoint can be used to prepare slides in a more attractive and effective way which includes the integration of multimedia elements like texts, graphics, animation and video. It offers ready-to-use templates based on themes, colours or effects which users can easily select according to their needs. Attractive materials can be produced by PowerPoint if its usage is optimised. PowerPoint can also convert files to the pdf version hence making the presentation materials more manageable due to the small size. Generally, PowerPoint which offer multimedia elements will create content that is interesting, fun, leaving out the boring elements (Osman & Hamzah, 2020). According to Sabri et.al (2019), in order to make learning process effective, the use of user -friendly tools and applications are required so that it is suitable for all.

3. PowerPoint in Teaching and Learning

PowerPoint is widely used by educators at the school or tertiary levels in the teaching and learning process due to several factors. PowerPoint is the common application that comes with the Microsoft Office package hence making it accessible to most computer users. It is widely used because it is user-friendly with brief display, simple and easy-to-understand menu and various language system besides the usual Roman system.

The PowerPoint content is continuously upgraded in line with the current technology so it can compete with the sophisticated and paid application. All it takes is for the users to be more creative in exploring its functions that go beyond mere slide presentation by including the animation, audio or voice recording and video production. According to Hana Damayanti (2015), those functions are seldom used because users are not aware of such menu and animation features besides having less exposure to PowerPoint usage itself. Hence users should be more proactive to explore all the functions available to optimise the usage. Asri (2016) also states that the low usage of PowerPoint among teachers is attributed to their being less skillful in computer and having less understanding in the functions of PowerPoint. There are several studies on how PowerPoint-based materials can help enhance learner understanding. A study by Ngin Wei Haw (2012) reports on the effectiveness of such materials in improving learner understanding besides increasing learner interest in the subject. Findings by Salleh (2007) also indicate higher learner achievement in a class that used PowerPoint during the teaching and learning process. A study by Hashim, Norshida, Saleh et. al (2016) also supports the effectiveness of PowerPoint as a tool to improve learner understanding.

4. Methodology

This study aims to look at PowerPoint utilisation in the development of multimedia-based module besides identifying its effectiveness to enhance learner understanding of a subject based on the feedbacks. In this study, the material developed is for learning Arabic Language among students with no basic Arabic. The material incorporated the use of PowerPoint and it has been pilot-tested in the final phase of development.

A total of four students were interviewed to get initial feedback from them on PowerPoint module. The students are first year, bachelor's degree students who are taking an Arabic language course at Sultan Zainal Abidin University.

5. Material Development

A multimedia-based material for the learning of Arabic has been developed with the use of PowerPoint as its base for the storyboard or item development. PowerPoint is chosen by the researcher for its user-friendliness in regard to Arabic characters. Not all applications are Arabic-friendly but PowerPoint allows for Arabic content or writing to be easily created. Besides, PowerPoint is also chosen for its availability in the computer applications besides requiring no Internet access for usage.

During the material development, all functions available in PowerPoint have been optimally utilised by the researcher including the use of pictures, animations, graphics, music, voice recording and finally a video production which incorporated all the aforementioned elements. Most of the graphics are created by PowerPoint in addition to other applications. Users can sketch their own graphics using colours and special effects they want before incorporating animations (which is available from the menu) into the graphics. Users can also readily use the animation menu to decide on the motion, style, duration and waiting time in order to transform their static materials into animation.

The audio for the material includes background music and voice recording which PowerPoint readily offers and the researcher has taken advantage of. One benefit of voice recording through PowerPoint is the recording can be made based on slides and if there is any slip, recording can be done for the affected slide only. Voice recording is helpful to facilitate learner listening skill through the incorporation of read-aloud text for correct pronunciation.

The last step in the material development is a video production through PowerPoint application. A material in a video version is more interesting and can be uploaded into the YouTube to reach a wider audience who is interested in learning Arabic.

In developing the material, adjustments are made based on suggestions from the experts and users like teachers and students. Evaluation and refinement are important procedures in the development of teaching and learning materials to ensure good quality standard.

Figure 1 displays a slide display of a sample material created by PowerPoint with the inclusion of text, graphic, audio and animation.

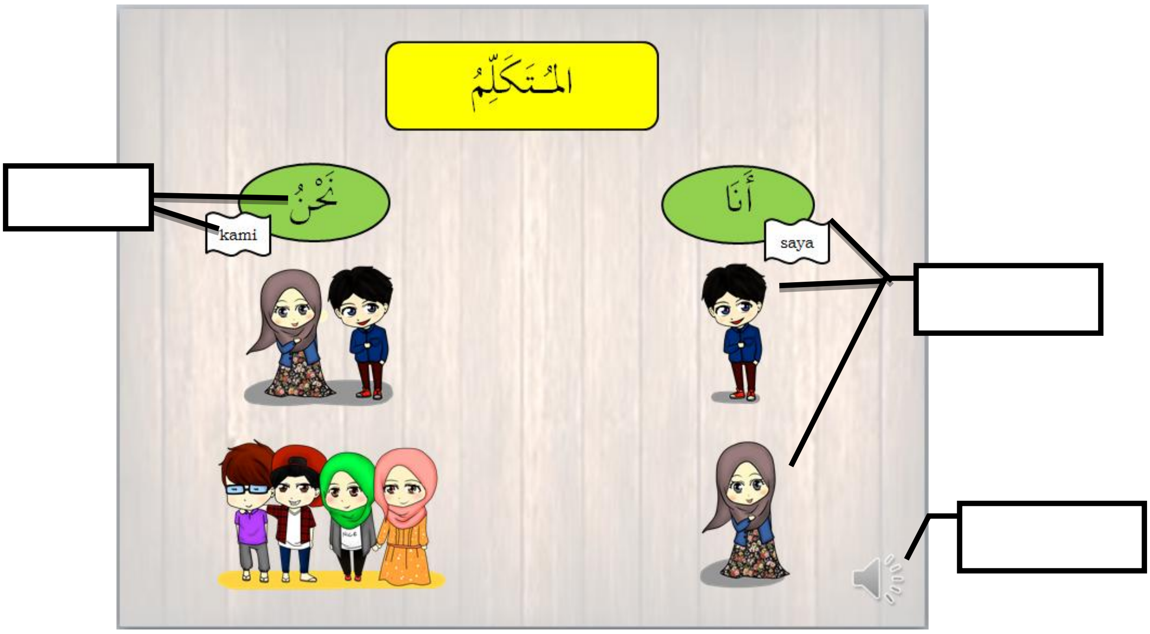

Figure 1. A sample material created by PowerPoint

6. Findings & Discussion

After its development was complete, the material was then pilot-tested among the students to determine its usability in enhancing their understanding. Interviews were conducted among four respondents who have used the learning material.

Student 1 states:

> “The video has motion unlike words only. If we read a line, we have to take time to think but a video with words and moving animals or things like that..It’s easier for me to understand” (PLJ_TB_AK_1:5_166-168).

The comment indicates the respondent’s view that video production from PowerPoint has helped him understand the subject content. Another respondent, Student 2 also expresses a similar idea,

> “Video helps better. If audio only, we can’t clearly see how a word is pronounced” (PLJ_TB_AK_2:2_99-100).

A video presentation through PowerPoint comes with an audio recorded text which a student can greatly benefit from. Student 3 informs:.

I think for those at level 1 in Arabic, may not know how to pronounce words or they don’t understand the meanings but listening to the audio, they can understand better (PLJ_TB_AK_3:3_154-156) .

The graphic item included in the video also benefits the students well. According to Student 4,

> “With certain graphics we can clearly see, maybe better..that this is for this one..and so on” (PLJ_TB_AK_4:3_109-112).

The feedbacks from the respondents indicate that the material developed by PowerPoint has helped them understand the subject better. This supports the findings by Asri (2016) that PowerPoint-based multimedia facilitates the learning and teaching process besides providing real experience, motivation and attractive presentation.

The use of multimedia in the teaching and learning process can also enhance performance of low achievers (Mayer, 2001). A study by Khairul Nizam, et. al (2014) and Alharbi (2012) indicates that students understand the subject content faster through a video. Muhammad Haron et.al (2010) also reiterate that a multimedia usage in the teaching and learning process has become a necessity for a more interactive and effective learning.

Harun, Aris, & Tasir, (2001), explain that the use of video can deliver a subject content which otherwise cannot be presented by other medium. Jaffar & Sha'ari, (2016) also state that audio can help reinforce learner listening skills in regard to producing precise Arabic pronunciations.

The findings from this study indicate the multimedia element is important and necessary in the teaching and learning process. Hence researchers have to be well equipped and skilled in producing such materials. PowerPoint is a good choice as it allows for unlimited creativity. In addition, PowerPoint is readily available in the computer, accessible without the Internet connection and user-friendly in regard to Arabic writing system. Hamid's research indicates that students agree that infographics which contain multimedia elements assist them to get better understanding of their study (Hamid, et. al 2020).

PowerPoint is indeed a suitable alternative medium for learning (Turrahmi, Yahya, & Erfan, 2018) and students are more inclined to choose PowerPoint for their learning (Sheeba & Begum, 2017).

7. Conclusion

The study has indicated that PowerPoint is capable of producing multimedia teaching resources and learners also believe that learning through PowerPoint can facilitate their understanding. It is undeniable that PowerPoint has its own unique strengths which are less explored compared to other sophisticated applications. The onus is on the users themselves to be creative so materials developed from PowerPoint can be effective in enhancing learner understanding during their learning process. Therefore, the use of PowerPoint among educators should go beyond the static slide presentation.

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Politeness strategies in motivational storytelling by American commencement speakers

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Abstract

Politeness strategy is a technique used by people to communicate more appropriately. Politeness is evident in different forms of everyday communication regardless of the location at which people communicate. One of these forms is delivering motivational storytelling. The purpose of this paper is to describe the politeness strategies used by commencement speakers while presenting their motivational storytelling within commencement speeches at American universities. To this end, the researchers selected ten commencement speeches delivered at top three American universities from 2010 to 2019 based on the QS world universities ranking system. The researchers adopted Brown and Levinson's (1978) framework who classify the politeness strategies that can be used to reduce or prevent threatening the public image of others into four super-strategies: positive politeness, negative politeness, off-record, and bald-on record. The findings have revealed that American commencement speakers resort to these strategies variously, but rely mostly on positive politeness to create a sense of solidarity with the graduates while motivating them. Within each super-strategy of politeness, there is a preference of particular sub-strategies that helped the commencement speakers to deliver their motivational storytelling. Furthermore, the findings have also shown that the original professions of commencement speakers have no significant influence on choosing particular politeness strategies.

Keywords: Commencement speeches; storytelling; motivation; pragmatics; politeness strategies; QS ranking system.

1. Introduction

Since prehistoric times, humans have used storytelling to communicate and transmit experiences and information. Storytelling can be defined as a kind of descriptive portrayal of concepts, morals, and experiences of particular people directed towards particular audience for particular purposes (See Labov, 1972: 359; Ricoeur, 1983: 150). It refers to a set of acts taken by specific individuals (real or imagined) in order to initiate or react to change, eliciting new thoughts and/or behaviours on the part of the audience. Additionally, it incorporates the storyteller's assessments of such changes in light of the audience's current environment (Feldman et al., 2004: 150).

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Storytelling plays a great role in evoking ideals that provide audience with sufficient confidence to make sound decisions in the face of difficult circumstances in their daily lives (Ganz, 2011: 274). In this sense, Storytelling encourages people to perform their own autonomous actions, rather than prompting them to voice counter-arguments. There are numerous instances of storytelling in many forms of communication, one of which being commencement speeches which take place at universities' or institutions' graduations.

1.1 Literature Review

1.1.1 Motivational functions of storytelling

The concept of motivation has been generally defined as the favourable attitude or disposition that enables us to carry out a given task or responsibility (See Kırkağaç & Öz, 2017: 96). Besides other functions, storytelling provides humans with an enthusiastic and motivational power to perform actions at moments of uncertainty (Goffman, 1974: 301). Humans have the disposition to adopt successful strategies and solutions tried by others to fix their own problems. They take advantage of others' experiences that are usually told in the form of stories. Accordingly, storytellers concentrate on how to negotiate the "scenes" of the story with their audience, which, in turn, create "sparked emotions" (Tannen ,1989:135). The social and contextual environment that storytelling makes Rowe et al. (2007: 49) among many others to view storytelling as "a promising vehicle for promoting … motivation". In this sense, storytelling is considered as a source of motivation and self-development mechanism that may guide people to approach their desired goals.

In environments of education, motivation serves as a powerful tool that enables students to perform their missions successfully (Lustyantie and Aprilia, 2020:153). Moreover, those who receive good motivation are empowered to be more responsive to challenges, among many other advantages (ibid) as they the importance of their future regarding their current conditions (Naderi et al., 2021:109-110). Good universities and institutions make use of all the motivational factors the enable their students to best possible outcomes from the beginning of their study until graduation. On graduation days, such universities and intuitions invite public and successful icons to share their experiences with the graduates in a hope to motivate them while they are entering a new section of their life which is outside the educational environments.

1.1.2 The Structure of storytelling

The structure of storytelling is made up of six stages: (a) Abstract, (b) Orientation, (c) Complication, (d) Evaluation, (e) Resolution, and (f) Coda, as delineated by Labov (1972: 363 ff). In (a), storytellers offer a general summary of their stories or draw the audience's attention to some concepts before starting the stories. In (b), the audience are informed of the timeframe and location at which events of a story took place. After that, storytellers present the intense events of the story, which include the sequence of acts and events that take place in the story up to the climax. The final outcome of the story is presented in (d). When the story ends, storytellers typically express their opinions and interpretations of the story's events and actions in (e) and return with the audience to the point at which storytelling has begun in (f). Although the structure of storytelling has been explored by many other researchers but Labov's framework remains one of the greatest frameworks in this context as its formulation based on analysing actual stories (Alenizi, 2020: 2060).

1.1.3 The Pragmatics of storytelling

Pragmatics has been defined by Leech (1983: x–xi) as "the study of how utterances have meanings in situations" where meanings and the aims of speakers are linked to principles of producing good communication. Thomas (1995: 22) presents a more complementary definition of pragmatics as "meaning in interaction". To understand the speaker's meaning, a negotiation between the interlocutors is required besides knowing the context and the potential meaning of the utterances that are uttered by the speaker.

As far as storytelling is concerned, Labov (1972: 364) states that understanding the intentions of the storyteller requires a full exploration of the underlaying actions embedded in the story and their relation to the structure of the story. Pratt (1978: 136) proposes that a teller, in a storytelling event, reports not only past events but also portrays a state of affairs to influence the audience in a particular way. The audience are encouraged to join the storyteller in looking at these events, evaluating them and responding to them in their social life. In similar sense, Tannen (1989: 92) describes the storytelling process as a mindful act into which both teller and audience are fully involved in communicating.

According to Rober et al. (2010: 29), storytelling involves a kind of selection process which can only be appreciated if the dialogical context in which the stories are told is taken in consideration. This process implies the centrality of the otherness in the mind of storytellers and their audience (ibid.: 37). Thus, storytellers have to deliver their messages in ways that make their audience feel satisfied. To ensure that their audience receive the intended messages of storytelling, storytellers resort to politeness strategies to present them in effective and polite ways.

1.1.4. Politeness Strategies

In the literature of pragmatics, there are various frameworks regarding the politeness strategies. However, the current study adopts Brown and Levinson's (1978) framework for its coverage to the politeness strategies employed by commencement speakers (henceforth CSs) in their motivational storytelling. Brown and Levinson (ibid.) view politeness strategies as means to soften the potential actions that may damage the public *face* of those to whom a speech is addressed.

Brown and Levinson (1978: 66) adopt the concept of *face* which is defined as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself." Any attempt to violate or damage others' public face will result in face-threatening acts (henceforth FTAs). They (ibid.: 73-75) point out that speakers can prevent or recover the damages that might cause by doing FTA by employing one or more of four universal super-strategies: bald on-record politeness (henceforth BOP), on-record positive politeness (henceforth PP), on-record negative politeness (henceforth NP), and off-record politeness (henceforth OFP). The universality of this framework has maintained its supremacy decades after its appearance (See Esfahlan & Boroumand, 2020: 1803). Hence, it has been explored extensively over the years in various contexts. However, the politeness strategies used by commencement speakers in delivering their motivational storytelling, according to the best knowledge of the researchers, receive little or not attention. Therefore, this paper is motivated to investigate these strategies in this type of discourse.

1.1.4.1. On-record positive politeness

Speakers resort to PP when they want to show their considerations to the desires of their addressees (Brown and Levinson, 1978: 101). Speakers can satisfy that by showing their addressees that they both share similar views or opinions in regard to a particular state of affairs (ibid). Huang (2007:117) stresses that PP minimises the potential FTA by emphasising a type of solidarity between the speaker and the addressee. According to Brown and Levinson (1978: 103-29), speaker can fulfil the positive face of their addressee through adopting one or more of the following strategies:

1. Notice, attend, to H (his interests, wants, needs, goods)
2. Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H)

3. Intensify interest to H
4. Use in –group identity markers
5. Seek agreement
6. Avoid disagreement
7. Presuppose / raise / assert common ground
8. Joke
9. Assert or presuppose S knowledge of and concern for the H's wants
10. Offer, Promise
11. Be optimistic
12. Include both S and H in the activity
13. Give (or ask for) reasons
14. Assume or assert reciprocity
15. Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding cooperation)

1.1.4.2. On-record negative politeness

Brown and Levinson (1978: 129) state that speakers use NP when they want to show their addressees that their negative face wants are preserved in an attempt to reduce a potential FTA. More particularly, this type of politeness is utilised when a speaker intends to imply to an addressee that “his want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded.” Furthermore, they (ibid.: 132-210) go over ten possible strategies that can be employed to save the negative face of an addressee:

1. Be conventionally indirect
2. Hedges
3. Be pessimistic
4. Minimize the imposition, Rx
5. Give deference
6. Apologize
7. Impersonalize S and H
8. State the FTA as a general rule
9. Nominalize
10. Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H

1.1.4.3. Off- record politeness

Speakers appeal to OFP when they intend to initiate a particular FTA without being directly responsible for its production (Brown and Levinson, 1978: 211). In other words, a speaker can express his intention in a manner that can implicate different interpretations to an addressee who must infer what is intended. Brown and Levinson (ibid.: 213-27) enlist a number of various strategies that speakers might make use of when they go off-record:

1. Give hints
2. Give association clues
3. Presuppose.
4. Understate
5. Overstate.
6. Use tautologies.
7. Use contradictions.
8. Be ironic.
9. Use metaphors.
10. Use rhetorical questions
11. Be ambiguous
12. Be vague.

13. Over-generalize
14. Displace H
15. Be incomplete, use ellipsis

1.1.4.4. Bald on-record politeness

BOP is used by speakers when they present their views directly without showing any redressive action to reduce the potential FTA (ibid.: 69). In this sense, speakers decide to deliver their message in a most direct and straightforward manner. According to Brown and Levinson (ibid.: 95), this PS has two different usages: (1) to ignore the addressee' face or (2) to minimise a potential FTA. The former can be utilised when the a "maximum efficiency" to say something is more important than satisfying the addressee's face. The later can be found in close relationships where a speaker shows his awareness of others' face by speaking without any redressive. As far this study is concerned only the first use will be investigated as the relationship between the CSs and the graduates is official.

1.2. Research questions

The purpose of this paper is to describe the politeness strategies used by commencement speakers while presenting their motivational storytelling within commencement speeches at American universities. Below are the research questions:

1. Which super-strategies of politeness are considerably utilised by commencement speakers while delivering the motivational storytelling?
2. Is there any significant relationship between the original professions of the commencement speakers and their utilisation the super-strategies of politeness?
3. What are the sub-strategies that CSs mostly rely on to implement each super-strategy of politeness while delivering the motivational storytelling?

2. Method

2.1. Data collection

This study is motivated to investigate the structure of motivational storytelling delivered within commencement speeches, and to do this it has selected ten commencement speeches delivered by American CSs at the top three American universities from 2010 to 2019. The QS ranking system is followed as it considers 10 % of the universities assessment to the employers' assessment of the graduates' working performance (QS World University Rankings, 2020). It regards how the universities and institutions prepare and empower their graduates for the employment market is as an essential indicator of the ranking. Thus, it is expected that QS top universities pay more efforts to maintain their graduates' employment experience and reputation when choosing an appropriate CS. More specifically, one speech is selected per year (See Appendix I).

The variety of the CSs' professions is also considered in the selection process; namely, the selected speeches are delivered by speakers of various professions, each two representing a particular profession. For a just comparison between the speakers of these professions, one motivational storytelling is selected per each speech. The selected commencement speeches are selected to represent five different professions of commencement speakers, namely business leaders (henceforth BCSs), judges (henceforth JuCSs), actors (henceforth ACSs), politicians (henceforth PCSs), and journalists (henceforth JoCSs).

The selected speeches are all available in the oral form on the YouTube channels of the selected universities (See Appendix A). However, the written forms of some of the speeches are not available on their official websites and the contents of the two forms are found nonidentical in some other speeches. Thus, the oral forms were used and transcribed by the researchers themselves.

2.2. Data analysis

We extracted one motivational storytelling from each selected commencement speech in accordance with Labov's (1972) structure of storytelling which consists of six stages (See 1.1.2). After delimiting the structure of each storytelling discourse, we searched for the super-strategies of politeness employed by CSs in total and by each group, based on Brown and Levinson's (1978) framework (See 1.1.4). Moreover, the sub-strategies for each super-stage are also investigated to discover the most dominant ones. Then, we tested whether the original professions of the CSs have a significant effect on the CSs in utilising their politeness strategies while delivering their motivational storytelling.

3. Results and Discussion

This section is concerned with the results and discussion of the selected data in accordance with Brown and Levinson's (1978) framework.

3.1 Overall analysis

In regard to the first question, an overall analysis of super- strategies of politeness is conducted. Table 1 asserts that all the CSs adopt PP as their first PS while delivering the motivational storytelling except BCSs who use PP and OFP with an equal percentage of (34.78%). However, other CSs show some difference of frequency in using the second PS after PP. Whereas ACSs and JuCSs rely on OFP with the precentages of (26.32%), and (25.00%), respectively, PCSs and JoCSs resort to NP with the percentages (25.00%) and (22.58%), respectively. The high reliance on PP to show closeness and soldarity with the graduates can be atrributed to the central aim of the CSs which is to park the emotions of the graudates to perform particular actions (See 1.1.1).

Table 1. The Use of super-strategies of Politeness among the Commencement Speakers

Super-strategies of Politeness	CSs											
	BCSs		JuCSs		ACSs		PCSs		JoCSs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
PP	8	38.09	13	52.00	10	45.45	14	50.00	14	40.00	59	45.04
NP	3	14.29	2	8.00	3	13.64	7	25.00	7	20.00	22	16.79
OFP	6	28.57	7	28.00	8	36.36	4	14.29	9	25.71	34	25.96
BOP	4	19.05	3	12.00	1	4.55	3	10.71	5	14.29	16	12.21
Total	21	100.00	25	100.00	22	100.00	28	100.00	35	100.00	131	100.00

Concerning the second question, a Chi-square analysis was the most appropriate test to employ due to the nominal variable and frequency data being used. It was conducted to find out whether its value (x^2) is larger or smaller than the critical value. It was also used to assess whether the original professions of CSs have a significant influence ($\rho < 0.05$) on the use of super-strategies of politeness. These statistics are as follows:

CSs / PSs	Observed frequencies					Expected frequencies					Chi Square	Crit. Value	P-Value
	BCSs	JuCSs	ACSs	PCSs	JoCSs	BCSs	JuCSs	ACSs	PCSs	JoCSs			
PP	8	13	10	14	14	9	11	10	13	16	0.84	21.02	0.84
NP	3	2	3	7	7	4	4	4	6	6	1.79		
OFP	6	7	8	4	9	5	6	6	7	9	2.48		
BOP	4	3	1	3	5	3	3	3	3	4	2.04		
Total	21	25	22	28	35	21	25	22	28	35	7.16		

Figure 2. One-way Chi-square: The relationship between the professions of CSs and their utilisation of super-strategies of politeness

As Table 2 displays, the Chi-square value for using the super-strategies of politeness is (7.16) which is lower than the critical value of x² (21.02). Moreover, the table shows the ρ-value is (0.84) which is also bigger than the standard level of significance (0.05). Therefore, the relationship between the professions of CSs and using the super-strategies of politeness is not significant in the case of delivering the motivational storytelling. This difference can be attributed to the universality of politeness of these strategies as suggested by Brown and Levenson (See 1.1.4).

3.1.1. Local analysis

In this section the researchers present the results and examples of conducting a local analysis for each super-strategy of politesses to answer the third question which is to find out the most dominant sub-strategies used by the CSs.

3.1.2 Positive politeness

As Table (1) above indicates that CSs exploit PP more than other super-strategies of politeness with a percentage of (45.04%) to state or assert particular principles or values to the graduates claiming or presupposing a kind of familiarity with the asserted ideas. This use of this super-strategy extends over six sub-strategies as shown in Table (3) below.

Table 3. The use of sub-strategies of positive politeness among the commencement speakers

Positive politeness	CSs											
	BCSs		JuCSs		ACSs		PCSs		JoCSs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Including both S and H	1	12.50	8	61.54	0	0.00	9	64.29	7	50.00	25	42.37
Presupposing Common Ground	4	50.00	3	23.08	8	80.00	3	21.43	4	28.58	22	37.29
Noticing H's interests	3	37.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	7.14	1	7.14	5	8.48
Giving reasons	0	0.00	2	15.38	0	0.00	1	7.14	0	0	3	5.08
Being optimistic	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	20.00	0	0.00	1	7.14	3	5.08
Avoiding disagreement	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	7.14	1	1.70
Total	8	100.00	13	100.00	10	100.00	14	100.00	14	100.00	59	100.00

3.1.3 Including both speaker and hearer

This sub-strategy receives the highest percentage of occurrence by CSs while delivering their messages to the graduates with a percentage of (42.37%) among other sub-strategies of PP used by CSs. The CSs' inclusion of themselves with the graduates as the most used sub-strategy of positive politeness is meant to make the graduates more positive about success in their future since CSs once belonged to this group and the same can happen to the graduates. In terms of the professions of CSs, it is mostly used by PCSs and JuCSs with the percentages of (64.29%) and (61.54%), respectively. The following examples illustrate how CSs include themselves with the audience to redress FTAs that might result as they express their messages.

(1) "They understood that the most difficult problems and the greatest opportunities **we** have are not technical". (Speech 9)

In (1), Sheryl Sandberg incorporates the inclusive form of the first-person pronoun "we" to include herself with the graduates as she encourages the graduates to explore the humanitarian side for great opportunities of success. She gives them the implication that she also needs to consider this kind of exploration to reduce any FTA that they might receive within this advice.

(2) "The story is about a case that many of **us** here remember". (Speech 1)

In (2), David Souter uses the inclusive first-person pronoun "us" to include himself with the graduates, achieving solidarity and saving their positive face as he reminds them of particular story about the American constitution.

3.1.4 Presupposing, raising, and asserting common ground

The statistical analysis reveals that the CSs employ this sub-strategy with a percentage of (37.29%) to be the second most frequent among other sub-strategies of PP. In terms of their professions, ACSs and BCSs use this sub-strategy more than other CSs with the percentages of (80.00%) and (50.00%), respectively. Other percentages of its use are distributed among JoCSs, PCSs, and JuCSs amounting to (28.58%), (23.08%), and (21.43%), respectively. The following examples show the employment of this sub-strategy by CSs while delivering their motivational storytelling.

(3) "It was argued before the Supreme Court of the United States on June 26, 1971, and we all know it is the Pentagon Papers". (Speech 1)

In example (3), David Souter tries to save the positive face of graduates by using the definite description "the Pentagon Papers" to presuppose that the graduates' knowledge of this referent.

(4) "You see some tough things out there. But you also see life- changing joy. And it all changes you". (Speech 7)

In (4), Matt Damon presupposes a common ground with the graduates by presupposing their knowledge of the existence of troubles and joy the human life in (a), (b), and (c) to save their positive face.

3.1.5 Noticing hearer's interests

By noticing the audience's interests, speakers indicate that the audience's aspects and conditions are known and appreciated (Brown and Levinson, 1978: 103). In the selected data, the CSs uses this sub-strategy with a percentage of (8.48%) among other sub-strategies of PP. Regarding their professions, it is only used by BCSs, with a percentage of (37.50%) and by JoCSs, and ACSs with an equal percentage of (7.14%). The examples below indicate the use of this sub-strategy by CSs to implement PP.

(5) "Things won't always end up as you think, but you will gain valuable lessons along life's uncertain path". (Speech 9)

In (5), Sheryl Sandberg expresses her consideration of the graduates' positive face by noticing their interests, wants, needs, and conditions in an attempt to reduce the FTA they might experience as a result of her upcoming advice and remarks.

> (6) "Because now and forever more when you Google yourself your search results will read "Harvard, 2013". (Speech 4)

In (6), Oprah Winfrey actualises the PP in her noticing to the graduates' possession of great degrees from Harvard University.

3.1.6 Giving reasons

Including the audience in activity can also be actualized by expressing the reasons behind what the speaker wants from them (Brown and Levinson, 1978: 128). This sub-strategy of PP is utilised by the CSs with a percentage of (5.08%). Among the CSs, only JuCSs and PCSs use it with the percentages of (15.38%) and (7.14%), respectively, among their employment of other sub-strategies of PP. The following examples manifest the use of this sub-strategy by the CSs.

> (7) "Now, when I do may offend you, you may find my actions immoral or unjust, but attempting to restrict my freedoms, in ways that you would not restrict your own leads only to injustice". (Speech 5)

In (7), Michael Bloomberg gives the graduates overwhelmingly good reasons to imply that he wouldn't want to infringe on their positive face when he explains to them that asking for freedom rights and rejecting those of others are unjust demands.

> (8) "To show you what I'm getting at, I've picked two examples of what can really happen, two stories of two great cases". (Speech 1)

In (8), David Souter states the reasons behind his intention to tell them some stories. By explaining his purpose to the graduates, the speaker tries to save the positive face of the graduates in making them feel appreciated.

3.1.7. Being optimistic

In this sub-strategy, speakers save the positive face of their audience by assuming that they share the same wants (Brown and Levinson, 1978: 126). The statistical analysis shows that the CSs use this sub-strategy with a percentage of (5.08%) among other sub-strategies of PP. in terms of the CSs' professions, we found that only ACSs and JoCSs employ it with the percentages of (20.00%) and (7.14%) among their employments of other sub-strategies of PP. The following example shows that Matt Damon refers to the optimistic aspect of working in the humanitarian side of life.

> (9) "But there's a lot of beauty, too. I hope you see both". (Speech 7)

3.1.8 Avoiding disagreement

Table (3) reveals that this sub-strategy is the least employed one by the CSs with a percentage of (1.70%) of all other sub-strategies of PP. In terms of professions, the analysis indicates that this sub-strategy is used only by JoCSs with a percentage of (7.14%) among other sub-strategies they utilize to implement PP while presenting their motivational storytelling within commencement speeches.

Example (10) below shows how Oprah Winfrey avoids disagreeing with graduates by displaying token agreement after saying that "I even prouder to share a fundamental truth that you might have learned, even as a graduate of Harvard". As she expresses her pride in telling the truth of her story and turning around her show again, she uses the "unless" clause to explain to the graduates that they may have a similar level of her knowledge if they have attended Professor Nagy's classes.

(10) "I'm even prouder to share a fundamental truth that you might not have learned even as graduates of Harvard unless you studied the ancient Greek hero with Professor Nagy". (Speech 4)

3.1.9 Negative politeness

The statistical analysis in Table (1) above indicates that CSs utilize NP with a percentage of (16.79%) other super-strategies of politeness with a percentage of to show some consideration to the negative face of the graduates. Such considerations are important to ensure that personal identity of the graduates is respected and evaluated by the CSs, so that the CSs' messages transfer smoothly. However, their employment of NP as PS extends over four sub-strategies at the micro level as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. The Use of sub-strategies of Negative Politeness Among the Commencement Speakers

Negative Politeness	CSs											
	BCSs		JuCSs		ACSs		PCSs		JoCSs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Impersonate S and H	2	66.67	2	100.00	1	33.33	1	14.29	5	83.33	11	50.00
Hedging	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	71.42	2	16.67	7	31.82
Stating general rule	1	33.33	0	0.00	1	33.33	1	14.29	0	0.00	3	13.64
Being Pessimistic	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	33.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	4.55
Total	3	100.00	2	100.00	3	100.00	7	100.00	7	16.67	22	100.00

3.1.10 Impersonate S and H

Table 4 shows that the CSs employ this sub-strategy with a percentage of (50.00%) as the highest among other sub-strategies of NP. The CSs avoid mentioning agents as the first sub-strategy used in achieving negative politeness to remove the boundaries between them and the graduates to make the graduates more comfortable and thus more motivated. In terms of their professions, CSs vary in their reliance on this sub-strategy while showing their consideration to the graduates' negative face. For JuCSs, it is the only sub-strategy of NP amounting to (100%). As JoCSs come in the second rank in using it with a percentage of (83.33%), BCSs take the third rank with a percentage of (66.67%). ACSs who come in the last rank in using the sub-strategy of impersonating the speaker or the audience use employ it equally with other two sub-strategies, namely stating general rules and being pessimistic with the percentage (33.33%). The following examples display how CSs utilise this sub-strategy while delivering their motivational storytelling. The following examples explicate the use of this sub-strategy by the CSs.

(11) "As a consequence, a choice may have to be made, not because language is vague but because the Constitution embodies the desire of the American people, like most people, to have things both ways". (Speech 1)

In (11), David Souter tries to save the negative face of the graduates by using the word *"people"* rather than the second-person pronoun (you) when he criticizes the double choices that they like in same way it is found in the constitution.

(12) "You see some tough things out there". (Speech 7)

In (12), Matt Damon shows his concerns for the negative face in using the distal deictic expression "*there"* as he refers to the hard conditions of life.

3.2 Hedging

The statistical analysis in Table 4 reveals that CSs utilise hedging with a percentage of (31.82%) among other sub-strategies of NP. In reference to the professions of the CSs, the analysis also shows that it is only used by PCSs and JoCSs with the percentages of (71.42%), and (16.67%), respectively. Their employment of this sub-strategy of Np is shown the example below.

(13) "And unfortunately, New York City, I think, several years ago has been witnesses to this trend". (Speech 5)

In (13), Michael Bloomberg uses the expression *"I think"* as a hedging to maxim of quality to save the negative face of those members of the graduates who may do not know about the *New York*'s accident he is referring to.

(14) "I believe that your actions will have consequences". (Speech 3)

In (14), Fareed Zakaria hedges the maxim of quality through employing the phrase *"I believe"* to free the graduates' negative face from the potential imposition while giving them instructions on how to deal with common challenges.

3.3 Stating general rule

The statistical analysis shows that the CSs appeal to this sub-strategy of NP with a percentage of (13.64%) to be the third sub-strategy in terms of frequency. When it comes to the professions of the CSs, Table (3) indicates that BCSs and ACSs use it with an equal percentage of (33.33%), and PCSs use it with a percentage of (14.29%), respectively. The following examples depict how the CSs show their considerations of the graduates' negative face through this sub-strategy.

(15) "You see some tough things out there. But you also see life- changing joy. And it all changes you". (Speech 7)

In (15), Matt Damon saves the negative face of the graduates by state a fact that people, in general, might face the good and evil in their life which, in turn, all leave an imprint on the individuals who experience them.

(16) "Time and again in public service, you're handed reminders of how institutions depend on our acts or omissions". (Speech 8)

In (16), Mariano-Florentino states his asserting in the form of a general rule to save the graduates' negative face that might be threatened when he asks them to look at the history to understand *"how institutions depend on our acts or omissions."*

3.4 Being Pessimistic

This sub-strategy of NP is used the least by the CSs with a percentage of (4.55%). More specifically, in terms of professions, only ACSs among other CSs use this sub-strategy mounting to (33.33%) among their utilization of other sub-strategies of NP.

3.5 Off-record politeness

The statistical analysis in Table (1) above reveals that CSs employ OFP with a percentage of (25.96%) other super-strategies of politeness with a percentage of to highlight the importance of the things they discuss so the graduates perceive the implied message (s) while their face is preserved. CSs resort to this type of politeness when delivering their motivational storytelling through employing one or more of its strategies to motivate the graduates indirectly to (not) do a particular state of affairs they refer to. However, their employment of OPF as PS extends over four sub-strategies at the micro level as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5. The Use of sub-strategies of Off-record Politeness Among the Commencement Speakers

	CSs											
Off-record Politeness	BCSs		JuCSs		ACSs		PCSs		JoCSs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Hinting	2	33.33	2	28.57	3	37.50	2	50.00	2	22.22	11	32.35
Tautology	1	16.67	2	28.57	1	12.50	1	25.00	1	11.11	6	17.65
Overstatement	1	16.67	0	0.00	2	25.00	1	25.00	3	33.34	7	20.59
Metaphor	2	33.33	0	0.00	1	12.50	0	0.00	1	11.11	4	11.77
Rhetorical Q	0	0.00	2	28.57	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	11.11	3	8.82
Understatement	0	0.00	1	14.29	1	12.50	0	0.00	1	11.11	3	8.82
Total	6	100.00	7	100.00	8	100.00	4	100.00	9	100.00	34	100.00

3.6 Hinting

The CSs employ this sub-strategy with a percentage of (32.35%) as the highest among other sub-strategies of OFP. The CSs' avoidance of being direct as the highly exploited sub-strategy of off-record politeness to make the graduates more comfortable in working out inspiring stories. In terms of their professions, CSs vary in their reliance on this sub-strategy while expressing their messages indirectly. PCSs use it the most amounting to (50.00%) among other strategies. As ACSs come in the second rank in using it with a percentage of (37.50%) among other sub-strategies of OFP, BCSs and JuCSs take the third and fourth ranks with the percentages of (33.33%) and (28.57%), respectively. The least use of this sub-strategy is by JoCSs with the percentage of (22.22%), as shown in the examples below.

(17) "It takes too much mental effort – effort that should be dedicated to creating and building". (Speech 10)

The OFP is realised in (17) as Tim Cook utilises indirect hinting to warn the graduates of wasting their time thinking of others' lives. More particularly, he avoids taking responsibility of threatening his audience's face while he warns them indirectly that mimic mimicking or mimicking or competing with those who had started before them because that will only consume their thinking and time, which must be directed to building their owns businesses.

(18) "The reward isn't fame or personal gain". (Speech 8)

Mariano-Florentino employs the OFP in (18) by giving hints to the graduates to avoid personal affairs when dealing with public commitments. People should never think about personal benefits to get out of their commitments to the public services. They should use their experience and knowledge to achieve their mission as perfect as they can.

3.7 Tautology

The analysis shows that the CSs employ tautologies as a sub-strategy of OFP with a percentage of (17.65%). JuCSs and PCSs use this sub-strategy the most with the percentages of (28.57%) and (25.00%), respectively. Then, BCSs and JoCSs use it with an equal percentage of (11.11%) and ACSs use it the least with the percentage of (12.50%), as shown in the examples below.

(19) "So, what was true then is true now". (Speech 10)

Tim Cook employs OFP in (19) in using the tautological form of the word *"true"* in *"what was true then is true now"* to warn the graduates in directly of giving others to control their time

(20) "When I tell you that we live in an age of progress, I am not urging complacency — far from it". (Speech 3)

Fareed Zakaria appeals to the OFP in (20) by using the tautological phrase "*I am not urging complacency — far from it"* to indirectly urge the graduates to do their best to continue the progress.

3.8 Overstatement

The CSs utilise this sub-strategy with a percentage of (20.59%) among other sub-strategies of OFP. Speaking in terms of professions, Both ACSs and PCSs utilize it with an equal percentage of (25.00%) and JoCSs and BCSs use it with the percentages of (33.34%) and (16.67%), respectively, among other sub-strategies of OFP they rely on while delivering their motivational storytelling, as show in the examples below.

(21) "They will teach you a lot... but you have to engage". (Speech 7)

In (21), Matt Damon realises OFP by overstating the teaching role of engaging with others. He asserts to the graduates the advantages of being engaged with other people as they represent a great source of knowledge and experience that the graduates need.

(22) "The idea that government would single out a particular religion and block its believers, and only its believers, from building a house of worship in a particular area is diametrically opposed to the moral principles that gave rise to our great nation, and the constitutional protections that have sustained it." (Speech 5)

The OFP strategy can be noticed in (22) as Michael Bloomberg overstates the impact American people might experience when oppressing believers of a particular religion.

3.9 Metaphor

The statistical analysis shows that the CSs use this sub-strategy with a percentage of (11.77%) among other sub-strategies of OFP. Among CSs, BCSs resort to this sub-strategy the most with a percentage of (33.33%) among other use of the other sub-strategies of OFP. The other CSs that the analysis reveals their use of metaphor as a sub-strategy of OFP are JoCSs and ACSs with the

percentages of (11.11%) and (12.50%), respectively. The following examples indicate the use of this sub-strategy by CSs as they present their motivational storytelling.

(23) "It's about making peace with the fact that you won't be here for the end of the story". (Speech 10)

OFP is mixed with NP in (23) as Tim Cook employs the metaphorical expression "the story" to assert the fact that they *"won't be there"* to observe the end of human life. He wants to tell them that that they will die one day before being ready to meet that moment.

(24) "Human beings will take your breath away". (Speech 7)

Matt Damon uses OFP in (24) through using the metaphorical phrase "*take your breath away*" as a benefit of engaging with others and giving hints to the graduates to exploit such engagement.

3.10 Rhetorical Questions

The use of rhetorical questions is not to get an answer from the questionee (s), but to get the them provide the questioner with a particular answer. Results show that the total employment of rhetorical question as a sub-strategy of OFP in the selected data reaches a percentage of (8.82%) among other sub-strategies. With reference to the CSs, the results reveal that only JuCSs and JoCSs use it with the percentages of (28.57%) and (11.11%), respectively, as shown the examples below.

(25) "Sound familiar to anybody here?" (Speech 4)

In (25), Oprah Winfrey's resort to OFP is manifested in her rhetorical question to the graduates about their understanding of her hard effort that made her successful. She asserts the difficulty for the graduates to understand her personal efforts that have led to her success.

(26) "Should the choice and its explanation be called illegitimate law making? Can it be an act beyond the judicial power when a choice must be made and the Constitution has not made it in advance in so many words?" (Speech 1).

In (26), David Souter appeals to OFP by asking rhetorical questions to avoid the potential imposition that might threaten the graduates' face because he has asked them to state their opinions as he asserts his stance towards legitimacy of choices made by courts concerning the contrasted rights and the necessity of such work for the society.

3.11 Understatement

The total employment of understatement in the selected data is (8.82%). Referring to the professions of CS, the results reveal that JoCSs rely on understating with a percentage of (11.11%) among other sub-strategies of OFP whereas JuCSs and ACSs use it with the percentages of (14.29%) and (12.50%), respectively, as shown below.

(27) "In a democracy, no leader's as important as the civic architecture he or she swears to protect and support". (Speech 8)

Mariano-Florentino in (27) understates the role of leadership comparing it with the public service to indirectly urging them to avoid preferring the personal interest over the service they do.

(28) “For I take that fear to be fear in large-scale". (Speech 2)

In (28), Tom Hanks understates the role of fear by comparing it with the faith that people have to motivate the graduates to be fearless.

3.12 Bald-on record

The statistical analysis in Table (1) reveals that CSs employ BOP with a percentage of (12.21%) among other macro- strategies of politeness while they advise, encourage, and warn the graduates to do or avoid particular actions or thoughts. In such case, the CSs exercise their advisory and motivational role to consider the maximum efficiency of what they present, as critical guidelines, over the graduates’ face. The following examples explain how the CSs use this strategy.

(29) “Please, seek out these opportunities to share your good fortune. Listen for clues about how to reconcile our aspirations and our always-messier realities.” (Speech 8)

Mariano-Florentino uses BOP in (29) to express the maximum efficiency of this advice to the graduates. Exercising his motivational role as a CS, he shows little or no efforts to minimize the FTA that graduates might have.

(30) “Give yourself time to mourn what you think you may have lost but then here’s the key.” (Speech 4)

BOP is used in (30) by Opera Winfrey to exercise her motivational role as a CS whose primary purpose is to deliver direct advice to the graduates. As such, she uses the imperative form to motivate direct the graduates to continue their hard work even if they fail at some point because all failure can do is change the directions of their mission.

4. Conclusions

Based on the results obtained through the analysis of the data in this paper, several conclusions can be presented here as follows. First, politeness serves a critical role in creating a sense of motivation on the part on the graduates while receiving the information presented in the storytelling. Secondly, positive politeness is the major super-strategy of politeness that CSs rely on to show their considerations of the graduates’ face demands while delivering the motivational storytelling. It is used to create to sense of solidarity and familiarity between the commencement speakers and the graduates so the motivation process can be conducted smoothly. As such, the graduates receive the motivational messages as common and mutual interests. Off-record politeness comes after positive politeness in frequency to engage the graduates effectively with the storytelling since the use of such rhetorical devices as metaphor, overstatement, understatement, etc. call the hearers’ cognitive skills to infer the implied meaning. Thirdly, the insignificant influence of the original professions of the CSs on the utilisation of the super-strategies of politeness indicates the universality of these strategies in this context. Moreover, the findings also revealed that the structure of the motivational storytelling in American commencement speeches comply with Labovian' framework of storytelling. It can be used as to add a proof to the universality of this framework.

This study contributes to enhance our understanding of the employment of the politeness strategies of motivational storytelling in terms of Brown and Levenson's approach. It may help all those who are interested in motivating their students and graduates to adopt politeness strategies as used by the commencement speakers. However, the findings of this study were limited to American commencement speeches and should not overgeneralized to all motivational storytelling. The findings of this study were drawn from motivational narratives given in American English; hence, it would be better for future work to conduct an investigation of the politeness strategies in other varieties of English.

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Appendix A. The Selected Universities and the Commencement Speakers

Serial No.	Year	University/ institute	QS annual rankings	Names of CSs	Original professions of CSs	Hyperlinks
1	2010	Harvard University	1	David H. Souter	Judge	https://youtu.be/eCxaDwOCXD8
2	2011	Yale University	3	Tom Hanks	Actor	https://youtu.be/baIlinqoExQ
3	2012	Harvard University	2	Fareed Zakaria	Journalist	https://youtu.be/CD6CW4fPQfs
4	2013	Harvard University	2	Oprah Winfrey	Journalist	https://youtu.be/GMWFieBGR7c
5	2014	Harvard University	2	Michael Bloomberg	Politician	https://youtu.be/Zhfn2zgFFJ8
6	2015	Harvard University	2	Deval Patrick	Politician	https://youtu.be/-flgIKTSIas
7	2016	MIT	1	Matt Damon	Actor	https://youtu.be/DFNgoZ5-qAM
8	2017	Stanford university	2	Mariano Florentina	judge	https://youtu.be/BP2ItX1XxOM
9	2018	MIT	1	Sheryl Sandberg	Business leader	https://youtu.be/8w1d1TWxwec
10	2019	Stanford University	2	Tim Cook	Business leader	https://youtu.be/2C2VJwGBRRw

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Summary of possible universal moral values in language pedagogy: A systematic review

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Abstract

Moral value is one of the crucial elements in human development, where moral or civic education formed a substantial part of the focus on personal development. This study examined the inculcation of universal moral values (UMVs) using language in teaching and learning as a vehicle to instil the UMVs. It has been ascertained through previous research findings that there is a dearth of systemic review approaches used in examining the universality of moral values, and how they can be inculcated via language teaching and learning. Hence, the use of the systemic review approach in this study contributes significantly to the field of the research area, as it employed this type of approach to fill the gap in the field discipline. In this study, the relevant literature on UMVs in language pedagogy (teaching and learning) are analysed based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) statement review method. Through the systematic review of Scopus, Web of Science, EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, ProQuest, and Research Gate databases, it was identified that there were 29 related studies. The result revealed four main themes related to the inculcation of UMVs in students through language teaching and learning (LTL). The four main themes comprised: the role of a language teacher, the language curriculum content, language activities, and interactive language multimedia. The researchers forwarded several findings-based recommendations from this study that for future studies there should be an emphasis on UMV-related language analysis, and a parallel research technique be conducted such as contacting experts in the field and citation tracking.

Keywords: language; review; universal; values; PRISMA

1. Introduction

Over the years, the world has witnessed the evolution of moral education globally. The perception towards education is that it is a process of imparting knowledge, skills, and ethical (moral) values to ensure a more balanced human development. Values are defined as “principles or standards of behaviour; one’s judgment of what is important in life”, or “the concept of goodness, desire and

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righteousness that are socially and personally shared and accepted among common people" (Oxford Dictionary, 2008). This definition is not very different from the universal moral values (UMVs) as it emphasises the applicability and inculcation of moral values found in societies, which are moral values shared by various religions, traditions, and communities consistent with universal values (Balakrishnan, 2010).

The education scenario in Malaysia is an ongoing process. Its aim is towards the enhancement of individuals' potentials in a holistic and integrated manner. Subsequently, its objective is to produce a balanced and harmonic individual in the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Education is an enabler for an individual to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society, and the nation (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 2005). If moral values are achievable through the curriculum, then the balance and harmony aspired in the National Education Philosophy will be achieved.

The Malaysian educational system initiated the emphasis on moral values simultaneously with the inception of the New Primary School Curriculum (Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Rendah - KBSR) in 1983 and the Integrated Curriculum of Secondary School (Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah - KBSM) in 1989 (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 1988). Subsequently, in 2011, the Ministry of Education Malaysia started rolling out the new Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah (KSSR) in stages, starting from Year 1. By 2016, the KSSR will be in place for all primary school years. A comparable standard-based reform of the Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah (KSSM) will be ready to roll- out to Form 1 students in 2017 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013,4-2). Consequently, the national curriculum is a revamp of the previous curriculum, equipping the students with the relevant knowledge, skills, and values to face the challenges in the 21st century (Chin et al., 2019). The initiation of civic education in the curriculum aims to develop holistic individuals; focused on ethical values. Towards achieving this aim, five subjects, which are, History, Islamic Studies, Moral Education, Malay Language, and English Language, were integrated with elements of ethical (moral) values (Ismail et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, integrated moral values in education should be holistic and not restricted to these subjects only. This consideration includes all language classes, with the language curriculum not focused solely on macro language acquisition skills as the norm (Mohamed Ali, 2017) or language used for academic or occupational purposes (Mohd Nizwan Musling & Mohd Taqwudin Mohd Yazid, 2019). It should also take into account the instilling of moral values. Thus, the language curriculum must contain innovative elements through the inculcation of moral values to realise the National Education Philosophy, which is focussed on the development of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner (Robiah Kulop Hamzah, 2011; Tan, 1997).

Conventionally, language is a vital means of promoting interactions, national cohesion, and preservation of culture, in addition to the cultivation of moral values. Owing to this, taking the Yoruba language curriculum in Nigeria as an example, the emphasis on the prominence of language in teaching and learning in schools is to protect and promote the Nigerians culture, inculcate moral values, and develops the students' physical skill and character-building (Ayo et al., 2019).

Unfortunately, there is an extensive focus on academic achievement rather than the inculcation of moral values in the current prevalent education system. Consequently, the neglect of adequate education has contributed to the discredit of value creation in younger generations. The absence of moral values in education has resulted in students behaving more negatively (Hasan et al., 2014, Mohamed Ali, 2017).

Hence, based on the current articles guided by two leading research questions, the researchers will execute a systematic review on - (1) what is the concept of universal moral values (UMVs), and (2) how can we inculcate UMVs through language teaching and learning (LTL)? This study is focused on LTL related to the inculcation of moral values as they impact students’ attitudes and development. It strives to utilise the present literature on UMVs and their implementation in language teaching and learning.

2. Method

This section contains the explication of the method utilised to gather and select studies related to UMVs, and their implementation in LTL. To scrutinise databases and materials used in the systematic review, the authors employed the 'Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses' (PRISMA) method, inclusive of materials such as Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases as the primary references to scrutinise the databases and materials. There are four phases in the review process, which encompass (1) identification, (2) screening, (3) eligibility, and (4) inclusion, together with data abstraction and analysis.

2.1. Prisma

This study is based predominantly on the statement given out by 'Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses' (PRISMA). A cohort of 29 review authors, methodologists, clinicians, medical editors, and consumers had developed the PRISMA statement. It contained comprehensive details regarding its background and development by focusing on methods adopted by authors in ensuring the transparent and complete reporting of systematic reviews and meta-analyses (Moher et al., 2009). It offers three advantages - 1) defining research questions in systematic research, 2) identifying inclusion and exclusion criteria, and 3) examining the extensive database of scientific literature in a determined time (Sierra and Cantera, 2015). The PRISMA helps in searching journal articles related to UMVs and their implementation in LTL.

2.2. Resources

This review uses Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) as the primary referrals employed in constructing this research. Scopus exceeds 22,800 journals from over 5000 publishers, covering a majority of topics encompassing subject areas on the arts and humanities, social sciences, psychology, and environmental science, including the hard sciences. Meanwhile, the WoS database consists of more than 33,000 journals covering over 256 disciplines, including subjects related to environmental studies, interdisciplinary social sciences, social issues, and development (Shaffril et al., 2018). This study referred to other reliable databases such as EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, ProQuest, and Research Gate to address the gaps in Scopus and WoS databases.

2.3. Eligibility and Exclusion criteria

There are four fundamental steps in the systematic review process identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. Accordingly, this section firstly identifies the predefined eligibility and suitability criteria for the crucial screening and exclusion steps of non-eligible aspects. The eligibility criteria encompass literature elements and appropriate empirical data from related journals. These will then be extracted, analysed, and used. The exclusion criteria include article reviews, book series, books, book chapters, short surveys, and conference papers. Secondly, the systematic review focuses on UMVs with their implementation in LTL. Hence, the inclusion involves only indexed articles in subject matters such as psychology, the social sciences, and the arts and humanities. Furthermore, the systematic review included only materials written in Malay, Indonesian, and the English language.

Thus, articles published in the hard sciences and materials not found in the three languages face exclusion. Thirdly, the period ranging from 2010 to 2020 forms one of the parameters. Lastly, all studies conducted worldwide are accepted if they meet the said predetermined criteria.

2.4. Systematic review process

The current research was initiated in January 2020, involving a systematic review process that utilised four phases (refer to Figure 1). Essentially, the first phase involved determining significant keywords to be used in the identification process, employing keywords synonyms through a thesaurus check. Additionally, this phase involved keywords employed in search results from previous studies. Notably, the identification phase involved words related to universal moral values; used in language teaching and learning were obtained through previous studies (as shown in Table 1). A total of 481 articles were identified (after removing four duplicates) as suitable for review. The second phase is the screening process. It involved the rejection of previous unrelated studies to narrow down the keyword search of the articles. This phase saw the exclusion of 340 materials, leaving a remaining of only 141 materials. The third phase that ensued is known as the eligibility process, involved accessing full articles. According to the eligibility criteria, the process excluded 112 materials as these materials did not contain relevance to moral values in education or language teaching and learning. The fourth and final phase is the inclusion phase. A total of 29 articles were selected for the review, as they were suitable for qualitative synthesis.

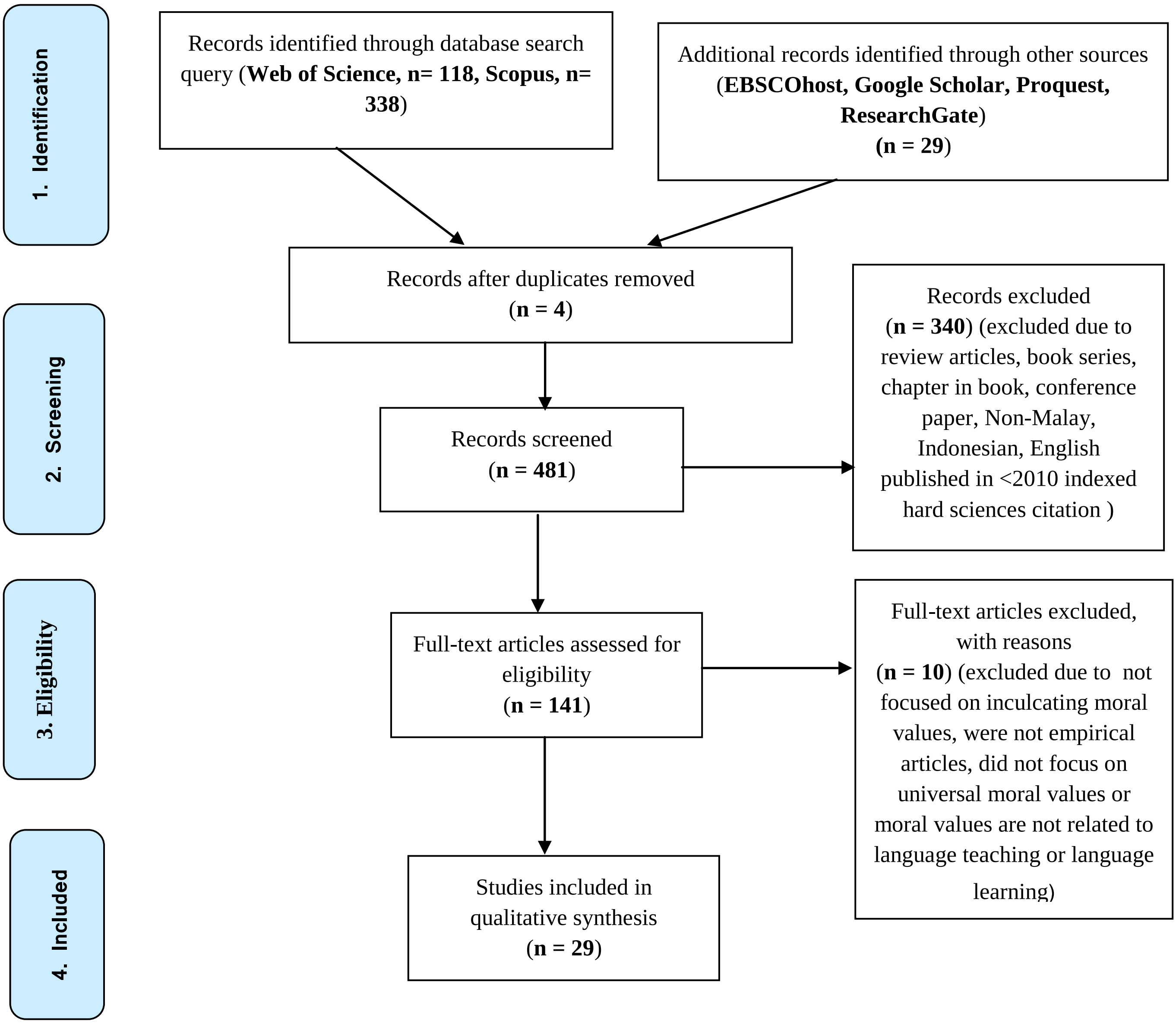


Figure 1. Prisma flow chart of the study for systematic literature review

(adapted from Moher et al., 2009)

Table 1. The search string used for the systematic review process

Databases	Keywords used
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("inculcate*" OR "instil*") AND ("universal moral value" OR "moral value$" OR "human value$" OR "compassion" OR "self-reliance" OR "humility" OR "respect" OR "love" OR "justice" OR "freedom" OR "courage" OR "physical cleanliness" OR "mental cleanliness" OR "honesty" OR "diligence" OR "cooperation" OR "moderation" OR "gratitude" OR "rationality" OR "public spiritedness") AND ("language learning" OR "language teaching" OR "language analysis" OR "language study" OR "learning" OR "teaching" OR "language"))
Web of Science	TS = (("inculcate*" OR "instil*") AND ("universal moral value$" OR "moral value$" OR "human value$" OR "compassion" OR "self-reliance" OR "humility" OR "respect" OR "love" OR "justice" OR "freedom" OR "courage" OR "physical cleanliness" OR "mental cleanliness" OR "honesty" OR "diligence" OR "cooperation" OR "moderation" OR "gratitude" OR "rationality" OR "public spiritedness") AND ("language learning" OR "language teaching" OR "language analysis" OR "language study" OR "learning" OR "teaching" OR “language”))
EBSCOhost	Moral values AND language learning AND language teaching EXPANDERS apply equivalent subjects LIMIT 2010-2020 SOURCE TYPES academic journals SUBJECT values (ethics), learning, education, foreign language education, ethics, moral education, teaching, language & languages, culture, education ethics, motivation in education LANGUAGE English.
Proquest	Universal moral values and its implementation in language teaching and learning LIMIT scholarly journals, 2010-2020, religion OR literature OR curricula OR teacher OR education OR studies OR language arts OR linguistics OR curriculum development OR language OR social studies education, article, english OR indonesian OR malay, religions OR teacher education quarterly OR language teaching OR management learning OR journal of language teaching and research or language arts.

2.5. Data abstraction and analysis

The process of data abstraction and analysis involved the analysis and synthesis of relevant remaining articles. Abstracts and full articles from the sourced items went through an in-depth reading to identify related themes and sub-themes, which responded to both main research questions. The extraction of data then ensued. UMVs-related topics and their implementation in LTL undergo qualitative analysis. Next, the authors organised the sub-themes related to the themes through systematic classification.

3. Results

The systematic review revealed four main themes and 13 sub-themes associated with the inculcation of UMV via LTL. The four main themes are (1) the role of language teachers (three sub-themes), (2) curriculum content (three sub-themes), (3) language activities (four sub-themes), and (4) interactive language multimedia (three sub-themes). The results presented a comprehensive analysis of the UMVs and their implementation in LTL.

The eligibility criteria have included literature elements in the selection appropriateness criteria. Thus, two of the studies focused on Poetic text in the language class (Myhill et al., 2013; Gasienica 2017). Meanwhile, three studies concentrated on moral values in LTL (Mohamed Ali 2017; Othman 2014; Zuliana 2017), with one of the studies focused on Yoruba language curriculum (Ayo et al., 2019), followed by three studies that concentrated on the role of language teachers (Kubanyiova et al., 2016; Li et al., 2011; Archana et al., 2017).

Furthermore, in terms of UMVs-related items and usage in LRT, there were seventeen moral values -related studies associated with the education system (Pike 2011; Joseph 2016; Sari 2013; Pantic et al., 2012; Tosun et al., 2015; Watson et al., 2019; Karasel et al., 2018; Balakrishnan 2010; Ariyanti 2016; Hasan et al., 2014; Brodeur 2013; Anam et al., 2019; Ramli 2013; Kumar et al., 2012; Alcota et al., 2012; Behrens et al., 2014; Nair et al., 2013). Moreover, three moral values-related studies have utilised interactive language multimedia (Abdul Majid et al., 2012; Agrawal et al., 2014; Ibrahim et al., 2016).

In addition to these aforementioned studies, four studies used a quantitative approach, while another study applied a mixed-methods approach. The remaining studies (24) employed a qualitative approach. In terms of year of publication, the number of studies by year are as the following: 2019 (three studies), 2018 (one study), 2017 (three studies), 2016 (four studies), 2015 (one study), 2014 (four studies), 2013 (seven studies), 2012 (three studies), 2011 (two studies), and 2010 (one study).

3.1. Concept of universal moral values

Kinnier et al., (2000), discovered that seven religions contained universal moral values (UMVs). The religions are Judaism (the Tanakh), Christianity (the New Testament), Islam (the Koran), Hinduism (the Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita), Taoism (the Tao Te Ching of Lao Tzu), Confucianism (the Analects of Confucius), Buddhism (the Dhammapada) and three secular organizations (the American Atheists, the American Humanist Association and the United Nations). The study result concluded that there are four major categories to the UMVs, with more specific values. Table 2 illustrates these categories.

Table 2. A Short List of Universal Moral Values (Kinnier et al., 2000)

Major Value	Specific Value
1) Commitment to something greater than oneself.	● Recognising the existence of and be committed to a Supreme Being, higher principle, transcending purpose, or meaning to one's existence. ● Seek the Truth (or truths) and Justice.
2) Self-respect, but with humility, self-discipline, and acceptance of personal responsibility.	● Respect and care for oneself. ● Not to exalt oneself or overindulge so as to show humility and avoid gluttony, greed, or other forms, of selfishness or self-centeredness. ● Act in accordance with one’s conscience and to accept responsibility for one’s behaviour.
3) Respect and caring for others.	● Recognising the connectedness between all people. ● Serving humankind and being helpful to individuals. ● Caring, respectful, compassionate, tolerant, and forgiving of others.

Major Value	Specific Value
	• To not hurt others.
4) Caring for other living things and the environment	

Four main religions and ethnic groups in Malaysia which shared sixteen values are the Malays (Islam), Chinese (Buddhism and Taoism), Indian (Hinduism), and Christians. Thus, these values represented the traditional religious values in Malaysia, which are "compassion, self-reliance, humility, respect, love, justice, freedom, courage, physical and mental cleanliness, honesty, diligence, cooperation, moderation, gratitude, rationality, and public-spiritedness" (Tan, 1997).

Apart from religious and ethnic groups, various countries have adopted and adapted the concept of UMVs, with values from Turkey (20), New Zealand (8), Australia (9), the United States of America (12), United Kingdom (9), and Japan (13). The universality of moral values can be seen as overlapping and shared by several countries. Notably, Turkey specified the moral values of "justice, independence, peace, being scientific, diligence, solidarity, sensitivity, honesty, equality, tolerance, freedom, respect, love, hospitality, responsibility, hygiene, patriotism, health, family bounds and helpful" (Karasel et al., 2018). Meanwhile, the universality of moral values can be observed in New Zealand which identified the significance of the moral values of "honesty, obeying, caring for others, respect, responsibility, good-will, mercy and duty as the values of the country" (Karasel et al., 2018). In addition, Australia listed their observance of the values of "objectivity, respect to reality, respect to opinions, justice, equality, caring for others, freedom, accept diversities, and seeking peaceful solutions to clashes" (Karasel et al., 2018). Then, the United States of America (USA) stated "freedom, secrecy, trueness, power of justice, human dignity, justice, loyalty, international human rights fairness, equality, responsibility, honesty, diversity, and respect to authority" (Karasel et al., 2018) as what they considered as significant. They were followed by the United Kingdom (UK), which listed their selected values of "trust, justice, honesty, trust, self-respect, responsibility, fairness, humaneness and respect to differences" (Karasel et al., 2018). Lastly, Japan detailed the values of "justice, respect to the community, nature, the elderly and parents, being industrious, courageous, sincere, freedom, organisation, kindness, courtesy, friendship, modesty, patriotism and respect to other cultures" (Karasel et al., 2018) as being their choice.

The impact of various sources used in determining these UMVs has affected the varying number of values in the countries mentioned. The varying religious beliefs and sociocultural diversity have a marked influence on significant moral values selected. These values are shared and contained certain similarities and correlations. Hence, there should be no redundancy and recurrence of moral values in the four major UMVs categories. Significantly, the education curriculum can be embued with selected moral values. Consequently, knowing the UMVs concept is the initial step before implementing their adoption into the education curriculum.

3.2. Ways to inculcate universal moral values (UMVs) via language teaching and learning (LTL)

The UMV inculcation manner via LTL investigated through an in-depth review revolved around four main themes, namely the role of language teacher, language curriculum content, language activities, and interactive language multimedia, in addition to the emerging 13 sub-themes.

3.2.1 The role of language teacher

This review revealed the roles played by teachers in instilling moral values in 19 out of 29 articles. The three sub-themes are the pleasant personality demonstrated by a teacher, interaction through the use of language-of-politeness, and the moral values taught by a teacher. Among the education elements is the language teacher. His/her responsibility is to manifest a good personality in terms of ethics and morals in the moral values installation model (Lickona 1991, Othman 2010; Kubanyiova et al., 2016). The demonstration of a good personality and mannerism has a significant impact on the students. These students can interpret their teacher's actions from the way they speak or behave, for the teacher to be exemplary role models for their students in shaping their personalities and moral values (Joseph, 2016; Ramli, 2013; Mohd Kamal Hassan, 2009; Tosun et al., 2015; Nair et al., 2013).

Subsequently, teachers can demonstrate their concern through empathy and by taking care of their students' needs. Teachers who maintain their patience, are tolerant and who motivate students' participation are likeable by the students. Hence, teachers should exploit this opportunity to influence students during the teaching process in classes, particularly in shaping their students' personalities and developing their moral values (Archana et al., 2017; Pantic et al., 2012).

According to Mohideeen (2017), students can be taught polite language during their early primary school days. The selection of expressions uttered is relationship and status-specific, dependent on the intimacy level, age stratification, and social status (Hermayawati, 2014; Zuliana, 2017; Ariyanti, 2016). During the interactions, sounds, pronunciation, intonation, words, and sentences are taken into consideration to ensure that the language used is suitable and carries moral values (Hermayawati, 2014; Ahmad et al., 1981; Li et al., 2011).

Furthermore, teacher-assisted activities pertaining to values can be in the form of guided activities, as teachers can point out the differences between good and evil that their students can apply in their daily lives (Mok et al., 1986; Behrens et al., 2014; Broduer 2013; Anam et al., 2019). Teaching and learning through storytelling can instil moral values among students. The components in the teaching process are speaking, reading comprehension, grammar and writing. An example of a method used in grammar learning is sifting through the text of a story via the syntactical structure to identify the moral values (Ahmad et al., 1981; Othman 2014).

3.2.2 Language curriculum content

A total of 16 moral values, as aforementioned as shared moral values in Malaysia, were integrated into the teaching of the form 4 Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) subject. The teaching of speaking, essay, comprehension, summary, and grammar form components of this subject. Among the chosen folklores taught at schools containing specific moral values are fables such as Sang Kancil stories, legendary stories such as Hang Tuah and Hang Jebat, and a short story entitled Buku Catatan Farid Badrul. Furthermore, through the written letter assignments on formal and informal letters, values are cultivated. Moreover, a summary of a text entitled "Materialism" enables students to significantly embrace moral values (Ahmad et al., 1981).

Aside from the Malay Language, the English language also serves as a vehicle in instilling moral values. The Form Four English language Syllabus contained moral values instilled through the English language LTL (2003) developed by the Malaysian Ministry of Education. Consequently, the integration of moral education and thinking skills in English language education results in a progressive and modern Malaysian society. Moreover, grammatical instructions and vocabulary acquisition in English textbooks are to inculcate moral values among students. Grammar rules with grammatical categories such as Subject-Verb Agreement and Tenses lead students to understand texts that contain values. Furthermore, vocabulary acquisition also provides contextual moral values (Mohamed Ali, 2017; Selvaraj, 2010).

Other than the Malay and English languages, the inception of Arabic language teaching in Malaysia was through Islam adopted informally through Arab Traders. The main objective of learning the Arabic language is to understand Islamic teachings and carry out religious acts, especially in learning Quran recitation. The Arabic language embeds the indoctrination of values. Its teachings encompass subjects such as Nahwu (syntax), Sharaf (morphology), Muthala'ah (comprehension), Insha' (essay writing), Istima' (listening), Muhadatsah (speaking), Imla' (spelling), and Khath (orthography). Moreover, Arabic language teachings focus on the essential mastering of reciting and understanding the Al-Quran that conveys examples and moral values (Nurbayan, 2014; Zuliana, 2017; Abdul Rahman et al., 2006).

3.2.3 Language activities

There are seven studies on language activities in instilling moral values where four sub-themes emerged under this theme consisting of speaking, writing, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension.

Conventionally, language education emphasises the four skills- listening, reading, speaking, and writing (Mohamed Ali, 2017) which are interrelated to three significant aspects: (1) affective that manifests the quality of faith and taqwa, (2) cognitive exhibiting the thinking capacity and intellectuality to inquire, expand and master knowledge and technology, and (3) psychomotor that illustrates the ability to enhance technique, efficiency, and skills (Zuliana, 2017).

From the four sub-themes, the speaking activities contained other intrinsic language skills. Debates by students tasked with titles containing moral value-related content often necessitate them to search and compile relevant content (Kumar et al., 2012), for example, 'the good and bad of promiscuity' (Ahmad et al., 1981). Drama or acting in an oral class stimulates various language skills that instil moral values through a theme or message to be delivered (Ahmad et al., 1981). Furthermore, extracurricular activities such as spontaneous speech cultivate moral values via the topics and titles selected based on chosen criteria (Zuliana, 2017).

Additionally, writing skills such as various writing tasks in multilevel classes are productive as they enable each language learner to express their competency in terms of lexicon and syntax usage (Gasienica 2017). Moreover, writing activities can be an impetus for students to inculcate and impart human values in their composition (Mohamed Ali, 2017; Pike, 2011).

Besides speaking and writing skills, listening comprehension skill is equally crucial. Activities like listening to the audio materials, which contain UMVs, may be incorporated with other materials-of-interest that concentrate on specific listening skills. For example, learners will listen to recycling talks, the advantages, and disadvantages of arranged marriages, poems, or any stories that involve values. Through these activities, students can enhance their understanding of moral values and inspirational content (Mohamed Ali, 2017). Occasionally, students listen to poetry and songs with lyrics illustrating the employment of correct grammatical sentence structure and vocabulary (Gasienica, 2017). The skills used in the comprehension activity consist of making inferences and engaging students' responses toward their enjoyment of the poetry, including their emotional and creative responses (Myhill, 2013).

The fourth and final language skill involves reading comprehension. It should be an enabler in understanding text content, like topics associated with climate change, racism, and good governance. Students could understand the values emphasised in the subject matters through their readings while giving attention to the problem and attempting to resolve them (Mohamed Ali, 2017; Zuliana, 2017).

3.2.4 Interactive language multimedia

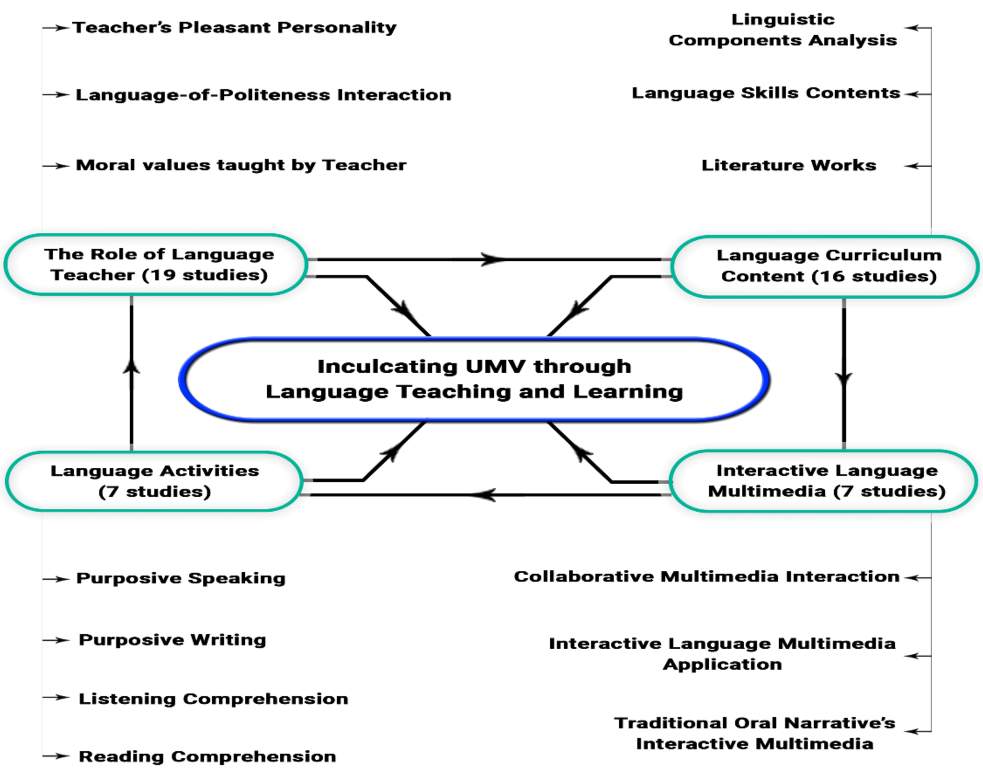
There are seven studies on interactive language multimedia with the implementation of moral values. The subject of interactive language multimedia involves three sub-themes - student development via interactive multimedia, interactive multimedia that enhances LTL, and interactive multimedia for moral values using traditional oral Malay.

Prevalently, science and technology have reached astounding levels of advancements. The learning environment supported by technological appliances such as computers can enhance collaborative interaction among students. This observation of such collaborations was markedly obvious by behaviours of assistance given to their peers in solving learning problems, being responsible for tasks assigned, and showing great interest in the activities (Mohd Sharani et al., 2003). There is a need for exposure to the usage of multimedia materials that carry positive elements and values (Muhammad Rasyid, 2009). The multimedia software enhances the cultivation of moral-related topics like narrations of civilisation that practise good moral values and personages of good characters alongside the importance of loving the family, society, and country. Hence, instilling moral values among students is achievable through the contents in an implicit manner (Abdul Majid et al., 2012). Moreover, interactive multimedia usage enables the instilling of various other proficiencies, such as encouraging the potential to develop imagination, creativity, emotion, logical thinking, confidence, and ethics (Abdul Majid et al., 2012).

Furthermore, teachers can level up their pedagogical techniques by employing advanced technologies that enable interactions among teachers and students through language learning applications (Azizi Yahya, 2010). Additionally, the interactive multimedia Reading and Writing Guidance Program (Program Bimbingan Membaca dan Menulis - PROBIM) application enables the reading skills among students to be enhanced (Jamian, 2011). Other than that, interactive media related to moral values can affect students' attitudes and behaviours. It indicates that the media possesses prospects to inculcate values through the concept of interactive learning (Ibrahim et al., 2016; Sawai et al., 2018; Agrawal et al., 2014).

Interactive multimedia for moral values education using traditional Malay oral narratives is called CITRA (Courseware Development to Project Positive Values and Images of Traditional Malay Oral Narratives) (Mukti et al., 2004). CITRA is a multimedia-based tutoring system that consists of various incorporated media and various teachings and learning strategies based on sound pedagogical theories. It ensures that the package designed can help learners understand the stories and foster positive moral values effectively and expeditiously. Multimedia plays a vital role in instilling positive fundamental values of traditional Malay oral narratives. Literary elements like theme, plot, characterisation, setting, mood, tone, style, and embedded moral values need to be used to develop positive values (Mukti et al., 2004).

All the aforementioned information is summarized in one graph as follows:



Graph 1. The UMV Inculcation Methods with Language Teaching and Learning

Based on the four primary language teaching methods in Graph 1, learning could facilitate the inculcation of learners' Universal Moral Values (UMV), namely, the role of language teacher, language curriculum content, language activities, and interactive language multimedia. Notably, the methods and sub-methods should be integrated for a sound understanding of UMV with appropriate practices.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that moral values are the practice of favourable behavioural norms. Meanwhile, UMVs involve the consensus by the global communities on what entails good behaviour patterns, regardless of their countries, religions, or ethnic groups. The study endeavoured to relate universal moral values with language teaching and learning for a balanced and critical language education and analysis (Kubanyiova et al., 2016).

The practice of ethical actions is in tandem with the objectives of moral values, which adheres to the Education Development Master Plan aspirations (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013), and the 2013-2025 Malaysia Education Development Plan, and emphasises the importance of instilling moral values in students for the creation of good students, based on a study by Othman (2014). It applies equally to both the teachers and students, who appreciate and practise moral values that are beneficial at the personal, societal, and national levels (Wan Hasmah, 2002). It illustrates that a good education helps nurture good character through intentional and proactive action by institutions and states to instil essential ethical values (Sari, 2013).

This study currently implements a comprehensive analysis of the development of UMVs that can be a universal measure in improving the impact of the curriculum of language learning and teaching in producing professionals with ethical behaviours and social responsibility. One of the media is the textbook used in the LTL for moral value creation. Its content should assist teachers and students in understanding the language structure and also for them to acquire and practise moral values. They can differentiate between positive and negative values by employing grammar and vocabulary (Karasel et al., 2018, Mohamed Ali, 2017).

Language activities assist students in enhancing four macro skills, and they augment the inculcation of values such as moral, spiritual, human, and ethical values. They contribute towards the attainment of world peace through the discussions on matters that lead to global warming, the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, regarding the rights of indigenous people, corruption, and what entails responsible citizens. Although values contained by those issues are subjective, there are universal values that can be identified and inculcated for language instruction purposes (Mohamed Ali, 2017).

On another note, students' multimedia materials software usage can impact moral values adoption towards their self-development. This development is through the impact of the moral values displayed in the multimedia application software, which consequently are practised by the students. Thus, interactive multimedia used in language teaching and learning is very useful in creating a more innovative self-development environment through numerous activities (Abdul Majid et al., 2012; Ibrahim et al., 2016; Mukti et al., 2004).

5. Future Direction

There are still a lot of unknown matters about UMVs and their implementation in LTL. Hence, researchers should embark on extensive research on specific UMV and its impact on language acquisition. A majority of previous studies had focussed on moral values in general. There is a lack of UMVs researches using the systematic approach. Hence, this study forwards the recommendation that future studies should focus on the systematic review method for studying the challenges experienced by countries implementing UMVs in their language education system. Other query search techniques using keywords search can also be applied for systematic review (Wohlin, 2014; Tsafnat et al., 2014), although the perception in the query search method for a systematic review is that the electronic keyword searches are believed to be ideal. One of the approaches is citation tracking (Wright et al., 2014). It involves the technique of gauging the impact of researches and identifying leading scholars of a particular discipline based on the citation frequency of these scholars through systematic analysis, and by examining which fields of study were involved in subsequent citations (Mavodza 2016). Apart from that, reaching out to the experts is another technique to seek clarification if the specialist literature is not clearly defined (Gotzsche, 2012).

6. Conclusions

This systematic review has analysed the concept of universal moral values (UMV) and its implementation in language teaching and learning. There are four central aspects involved in the execution of the UMVs, consisting of 1) commitment to something greater than oneself, 2) self-respect, coupled with humility, self-discipline, and acceptance of personal responsibility, 3) respecting and caring for others, and 4) caring for other living things and the environment. The researchers have identified four themes based on the findings of the systematic reviews in terms of ways to instil UMVs in language teaching and learning, namely the roles of language teachers toward students in LTL, the LTL curriculum, activities through LTL, and interactive multimedia in LTL. These aspects undergo further division resulting in 13 sub-themes.

The review presents several recommendations for future studies. Firstly, there is a significant need for the intensification of extensive and comprehensive studies on UMVs with in-depth analysis and detailed explanations on the impacts and challenges of countries that inculcate universal moral values (UMVs) through their language education system. Secondly, the researchers are to practice complementary methods besides keyword query search methods like citation tracking and reaching out to the experts in disciplinary fields.

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Challenges facing Jordanian undergraduates in writing graduation research paper

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Abstract

Writing a research paper as a graduation requisite by university students is an important part of university education. It is not a simple task for most university students who face several problems during writing the graduation project. Several kinds of research have been conducted onrecognising the challenges and problems that face students in academic writing, but to the researcher's best knowledge, no study has been conducted on the problems faced in writing a graduate research paper by Jordanian undergraduate students of the English Language and Literature major. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the academic writing challenges and difficulties encountered in writing graduation papers by EFL undergraduate students in the Department of English at Alzaytoonah University of Jordan (ZUJ). The data for the study was collected through distributing a questionnaire of three parameters: attitude about writing a research paper, methodology challenges, and background knowledge about research. The questionnaire is based on identifying the causes of the students' challenges in writing their graduation papers. The respondents were 45 undergraduate students of the English Language and Literature. The findings revealed that the most important problems were lack of an academic prerequisite of teaching the techniques of how to write a research paper, lack of knowledge of research paper writing process, lack of resources, lack of the methodology, etc. Thus, for these reasons, the present study attempts to present suggestions and recommendations to overcome such hurdles faced by graduate students in writing their graduation research papers.

Keywords: academic writing; challenges of writing graduation project; undergraduate students; research paper genre

1. Introduction

Most native and non-native English language students face significant challenges with academic writing (Meyer, 2014). Academic writing is not the only skill that is required for most Arab learners who learn the English Language as Second Language (ESL). As a process, writing encompasses a journey that reflects the voice of the writers resulted out of a set of stages, skills and background knowledge that mould what they want to say. For ESL students the stage of writing is preceded by a list of other skills integrated in their four academic years that lead to their writing improvement such as grammar, vocabulary, reading, speaking, composition, etc. (Zimmerman, 2009; Weigle, 2014; Cumming, 2016). Thus, academic writing skills represent a critical stage to be acquired by students in higher institutions (Zakaria, N. Y. and Hashim, H., 2020).One stage that shows comprehension ability of the students to those skills is when they write their graduation project. In this process, students face

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a series of challenges such as those related to their proficiency in L2, lack of knowledge in writing a research paper such as choosing the topic that suits their major, choosing the correct resources for their project, writing the proposals, etc. Various factors affect the student's writing of the research paper, i.e., personal and external.

To the best of our knowledge, no study has explored the common problems faced by Jordanian undergraduate students in writing their graduation projects. Therefore, the study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the challenges faced by undergraduate studentsin writing a research paper at AlZaytoonah University of Jordan?
2. What are the aspects thatcause the academic writing challenges among the students?
3. What is needed to overcome the challenges?

This study attemptsto achieve the following objectives:

1. Help both EFL students and academic staff in Jordanian universities to envisage the problems associated with writing graduation research papers.
2. Shed light on solutions to overcome such issues especially for undergraduate students majoring English Language and Literature.

2. Literature Review

In every discipline, academic writing represents a significant skill in language production. Thisskill is governed byfeatures of formality, objectivity, and accuracy. To say that academic writing is formal means conveying information in an unbiased way where objectivity realized in the main detailed theme regardless of personalizing or making a direct reference to the reader or the writer. From a technical point of view, academic writing should be accurate in its language structure so that message is delivered explicitly to the reader. Hence, researchers, professors, scholars, and students use academic writing to convey perspectives, ideas, arguments, conversations, etc. In fact, writing has always been a challenge and even troublesome in various directions and in different contexts because learning how to write is governed by two factors: being a tool for effective communication and the examination of the various issues faced by L2 writers (Graham & Perin, 2007; Lee & Tajino 2008; Negari, 2012; Dar & Khan, 2015). Such a challenge can be seen not only with native English students but more with non-native students who must write in the English Language as a globe mediation of knowledge (Hyland, 2003; Mahboob, 2014; Marlina & Giri, 2014).

As a genre, academic writing has been explored by a number of scholars. According to Swales (1990) in his book *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*, he believes that any text is usually made by a series of moves with functions that serve both the writer and the discourse community:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as a prototypical by the parent discourse community. The genre names inherited and produced by discourse communities are imported by other constitute valuable ethnographic communication, but typically need further validation (Ibid, p. 58).

Hyland (2009: p. 46) considered academic writing as a means of "grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations". Therefore, academic writing is conducted in various forms and may cover the variety of critical approaches that can be applied to a certain subject. In other words, academic writing is a thinking tool for language development, organizing idea, transforming information, structuring arguments, critical thinking, etc. (Hyland K, & Tse P., 2004; Hyland and Tse, 2005; Tardy, 2005; Turner, 2011; Bacha, 2010; Bacha, 2012). Guo, Y.H (2014, p. 56) pointed out that research paper is both persuasive and knowledge-creating per se.In this respect, and in any academic setting, academic writing is an example of a formal written work that may come in different forms such as the most common ones of the dissertation, literary analysis, research paper and it is the latter that is more to be concerned within the present study.

A research paper is a genre-based form of academic writing with pedagogy. Writing a research paper is a process that requires critical thinking for seeking out information about a certain subject, evaluating sources, organizing and composing ideas to stand out and back them up with the opinions and views of others (Winkler, A. and Metherell, J., 2011). In fact, the research paper adds not only to the subject under discussion but also it serves the student(s) with more advanced knowledge in the field at hand for more exploration. Swales (1990: p.93) argued that a research paper or as he called it a 'research article' is:

A written text (although often containing non-verbal elements), usually limited to a few thousand words, that reports on some investigation carried out by its author or authors. In addition, the RA will usually relate the findings within it to those of others, and may also examine issues of theory and/or methodology. It is to appear or has appeared in a research journal or, less typically, in an edited book-length collection of papers. Swales (1990: p. 93)

Swalecompared the organisation of any research article to an hourglass where it resembles the transition made from a general field to a specific topic in the article and then another transition is made from the findings of the study to implications of the general findings at the end of the article as shown in Figure 1 below:

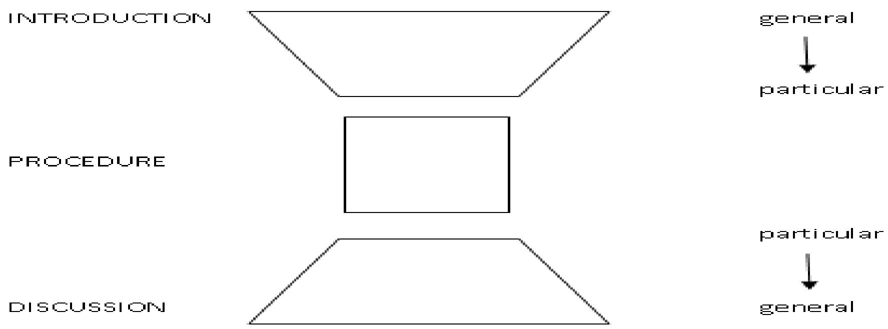

Figure 1. The hour-glass model of article structure in Swales (1990: p.134)

According to Neville (2007, p. 1), research is "a process of enquiry and investigation; it is systematic, methodical and ethical; research can help solve practical problems and increase knowledge." Thus, writing a research paper provides the student of any degree course a remarkable opportunity for independence and control on what they learn. Several factors govern the student's progress in writing a scientific research paper as a graduation project. Several studies which discussed the challenges that students face with academic writing have considered such various factors. Some of these studies were more concerned with the teacher-related, with the student-related, or with the social-related factors. The focus of most studies was on the academic writing problems faced by the EFL learners with writing assignments or even when writing their dissertations (Pearson and Kayrooz, 2004; Thondhlana et al., 2011; Al-Sawalha & Chow, 2012; Dwihandini, L. A., Marhaeni, A.A. I. N., & Suarnajaya, I. W., 2013; Pineteh, 2013; Mahammoda, S. A, 2016; Al-Qaderi I., 2016). Most of these studies varied in discussing the challenges faced by L2 learners, especially in producing an excellent quality of writing.

Concerning the challenges and difficulties accompanied by writing a research paper, it is not limited to a certain field, rather significant to both scientific and unscientific fields (Rajasekar et al., 2013). Thus, the word "research" composes two parts research which means to search again and spend time and efforts investigating, evaluating and interpreting sources and eventually come up with a unique perspective on the topic at hand. Respectively, scientific researchers and educators aim to and hope for obtaining considerable and reliable information about any topic that may be of benefit to solve problematic issues for the educational community (Lodico, M., Spaulding, D. and Voegtle, K., 2010; Bocar, 2013). This is clearly shown with ESL and EFL learners who often face challenges while writing in the English language and most of their problems are because of writing apprehension (Al-Khasawneh, 2010; Abdulkareem, M. 2013). It is an apprehensive task for both native and nonnative speakers since language learners at all levels consider writing as a difficult language skill (Hanna, 2010; Al-Qaderi I., 2016), especially for the EFL learners. Therefore, the primary concern of the present study is to address and investigate the challenges and obstacles faced by Jordanian university students in writing their graduation research paper.

3. Method

3.1 Research design

The present study has used qualitative and quantitative approach to explore, identify and determine the difficulties that Jordanian university undergraduate students of English language and literature major face in writing their graduation project. The method of this study is based on conducting data statistically from the participants by using the a 3-point Likert scale questionnaire of 25 items which address the students attitudes and opinions towards their experience of writing their graduation project and what kind of challenges they faced in that distribution. The students were asked to choose from three points grading as *agree*, *neutral* and *disagree*. The design of the questionnaire targeted a number of writing research difficulties that may face graduate students.

3.2 Participants

The respondents of this study comprised 45 Jordanian undergraduate students of English Language and Literature at the Department of English, Al-Zaytoonah University. These students are only ofEnglish Language and Literature major and preparing for their final year graduation project. They were 30 female and 15 male in their final academic semester.

3.3 Data analysis

The data analysis of the study is based on a questionnaire that is divided into three parameters covering the problems facing the students:

1- Attitude about writing a research paper
2- Methodology Challenges
3- Background knowledge about research

Each of these parameters highlights a list of items that target the obstacles faced by the students in writing a graduation project. To measure the students' responses, the data were processed statistically distributed with frequencies and percentages.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Attitude

The first parameter targeted the various attitudes of the students towards writing a research paper as a graduation project. As noted from the analysis and shown in Table (1) that out of a total of 45 students, most of the students 35 (78%) lack knowledge of how to write a research paper. This is a very critical issue for any student who asked to write their graduation project. Another important finding is that 24 (53.3%) students didn't have the chance to study a course on how to write a research paper, since there is no prerequisite course of how to write a research paper before stepping into the research writing stage. Considerably, choosing a topic for the graduation project is not an easy task as 23 (51%) of the total 45 students agreed they lack knowledge of choosing a topic for their research paper, and 20 (44.4%) students depend on themselves in choosing the topic of the research and not on the supervisor. What it interestingly realized from the data analysis is that 32 (71%) of the total 45 students depend on collecting data and information from the internet more than borrowing resources from the libraries; whereas 25 (56%) depend on books for their knowledge resources. This is because some students prefer to access direct and specific information from the net rather than reading books related to their selected topic of research, since they sometimes face challenges with the lack of resources in libraries. Such difficulty will genuinely affect the students' choices for a topic to write about for their graduation paper.

When the students were asked about their general attitude towards writing a research paper, 25 (56%) believe that writing a research paper is not a simple task. Regarding time management for writing the research paper, 20 (44.5%) agreed upon its sufficiency while the other half varied in their opinion because of either having a job or overburdened with study and assignment obligations. Finally, most of the students agreed the supervisor is very supportive.

Table 1. Distribution of the students' attitudes about the problems in writing a research paper

Questionnaire items	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
	Freq %	**Freq %**	**Freq %**
I have knowledge of how to write a research paper	7 (15%)	3 (7%)	35 (78%)
I took a university course on writing a research paper	15 (33.4%)	6 (13.3%)	24(53.3%)
My supervisor chooses the topic for me	16 (35.6%)	9 (20.0%)	20(44.4%)
I depend on the internet for my knowledge resources	32 (71%)	2 (4.4%)	11(24.4%)
I depend on books for my knowledge resources	25 (56 %)	11(24 %)	9 (20%)

I have enough time for writing my research paper	20 (44.5%)	11(24.4%)	14(31.1%)
My supervisor reads and checks my paper constantly	32 (71%)	2 (4.4%)	11(24.4%)
I have knowledge of choosing a topic for my research paper	13 (29 %)	9 (20 %)	23 (51%)
Writing a research paper is easy for me	11 (24%)	9 (20%)	25 (56%)
My supervisor is very supportive	27 (60%)	5 (11%)	13 (29%)

4.2 Methodology

On the research methodology parameter, as shown in Table (2), 18 (40%) agreed on knowing to make a good research methodology. This finding reflects the confusion and misconception as on the level of attitude previously, most of the students disagreed with knowing how to write a research paper. The general information they get from the supervisors does not start writing the papers. Linking to this challenge, 24 (53.3%) of the total 45 students believed they lack having an obvious idea of how to collect data for their research, and this led to another hurdle in shaping the correct research methodology. On the other hand, 24 (53.4%) know how to write both the introduction and conclusion of the research paper since they have taken essay courses in their academic years. 26 (57.8%) students agreed they understand how to organize ideas. Another important finding is that 27(60%) of the students face difficulty in paraphrasing the selected information from resources. Most students misunderstand the difference between paraphrasing and summarizing. Sometimes students face difficulties in finding the right word and sentence structure that fits the selected resource information without changing the original content. In other words, students need to understand how to paraphrase or they would fall under the trap of Plagiarism (Yulia, 2012).

The impact of the Arabic language system as L1 affects the students' critical thinking in the second language (L2). Similarly, 22 (42.9%) lack knowledge of making an in-text and work cited list when documenting information taken from resources that serve their selected topic for research. Again, this difficulty is related to not having the chance to study an academic course related to teaching students the techniques for writing a research paper. Yet, 17(37.8%) students are familiar with critical thinking that is needed in academic writing.

Table 2. Distribution of the students' challenges about research methodology

Questionnaire items	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**
	Freq %	**Freq %**	**Freq %**
I know how to make a good methodology for my research paper	18 (40%)	16 (35.6%)	11(24.4%)
I have a clear idea of how to collect data for my research	12(26.6%)	9 (20.0%)	24 (53.3%)
I have knowledge of how to organize ideas	26(57.8%)	7 (15.6%)	12(26.6%)
I have knowledge of writing both introduction and conclusion	24(53.4%)	10 (22.2%)	11(24.4 %)
I have knowledge of how to paraphrase	8(18%)	10 (22%)	27(60%)
I know how to make in-text citation and work cited list	16(35.5%)	7 (15.6%)	22(42.9%)
I have knowledge of making a critical thinking	17(37.8%)	14 (31.1%)	14(31.1 %)

4.3 Background knowledge

The data analysis shows that students' background knowledge about which style of research paper they should choose is not clear. This is shown in Table (3) where 32 (71.1%) of the total 45 participants who have no clear idea of the differences between MLA, APA, AND Chicago Styles of writing a research paper. On the level of adequate knowledge on academic writing, 30 (66.6%) of the students agreed they do because of knowledge earned from previous academic courses. 20 (44.4%) of the students depend on their point of view in the discussion of data analysis since they believe it is easier to depend on their understanding rather than on literature review. Such finding is very overwhelming since students should learn how to not put their personal opinions when analyzing data, especially that is concerned with English literature and that they should verify such opinions based on either previous studies in the field or on books of criticism. Another interesting finding is that although 26 (58%) of the students know how to find books in the library, yet it is shown that they prefer to select information from resources on the net rather than from the library. Comparably was 21 (47%) of the students agreed they can access plenty of resources that serve their paper. Furthermore, 19 (42%) of the respondents to this questionnaire claimed they know how to write a literature review for the study. 26 (57.7%)–28 (62.3%) regularly meet the supervisor and commit to his / her guidance.

Table 3. Distribution of the students' challenges about background knowledge inwriting research

Questionnaire items	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**
	Freq %	**Freq %**	**Freq %**
I depend on my point of view in the data analysis	20 (44.4%)	10(22.2%)	15(33.3%)
I have a clear idea of the differences between MLA, APA, AND Chicago Styles of writing a research paper	5(11.1%)	8 (17.8%)	32(71.1%)
I know how to find books in a library	26(58%)	10 (22 %)	9 (20 %)
I know how to write a literature review for the study	19 (42 %)	12(28 %)	14(31 %)
I can access plenty of resources that serve my paper	21(47%)	15 (33 %)	9 (20%)
I am committed to the supervisor's guidance	28(62.3%)	11 (24.4%)	6(13.3%)
I regularly meet my supervisor	26(57.7%)	9 (20.0%)	10 22.2%)

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The current study sheds light on the challenges and difficulties faced by Jordanian students in writing their graduation research paper and whose major is English Language and Literature. The following chart sums the overall responses from the participants to the questionnaire as shown in Figure 2 below:

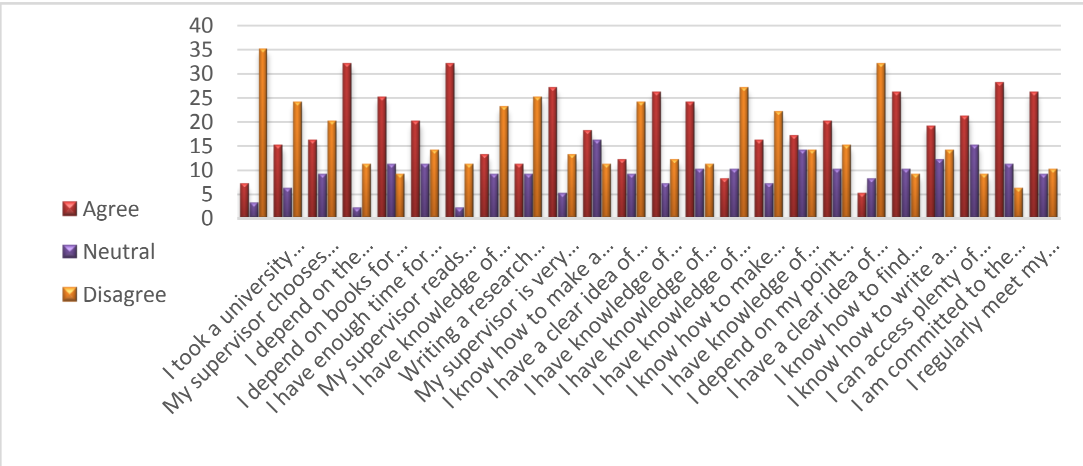

Figure 2. The Total distribution of participants' answers to the questionnaire of the study

As pointed out previously, 45 students were submitted to answer a questionnaire of three parameters and the results identified the issues and challenges that affected writing their graduation project and eventually led to frame potential solutions to those challenges.

Based on the data analysis, it is found that many challenges and difficulties faced the students in writing their graduation research papers in the major of English Literature. The present study revealed that students lack knowledge and adequate understanding of the essence of how to write a research paper because they lack a prerequisite course of writing a research paper. This is a very overwhelming finding as it led the students to confusion in writing the research. This confusion started from the hurdles they face in choosing the topic, lack of resources for their research and dependence on the internet for general information more than collecting information from authentic resources like books and articles in the libraries. Moreover, they endure confusion in writing a literature review, citing information, and framing a good methodology for the research, especially as they lack knowledge of the differences between styles of writing a research paper (MLA, APA, or Chicago).

Consequently, and as the findings of the present study showed, it can be concluded that the students of the major English Language and Literature at AlZaytoonah University of Jordan meet a lot of shortcomings in writing their graduation research paper. This is because of their lack of understanding of the significance of research and how it needs hardworking and patience. Therefore, it is recommended that the students should have a prerequisite course in their curricula on how to write a research paper besides other academic courses they already have. Furthermore, the students must be involved in heavy duties of writing research papers for most of the academic courses taken and to be introduced to the ways of how to collect data from authentic resources in the library and try to encourage them to not depend highly on general information from the internet. This would help the students not be indulged in the dilemma and fear of writing a research paper and not to only focus on the techniques of how to write a paragraph or an essay. Also, it is recommended to expand the scope of the present study to a wider platform of students from different Jordanian universities to understand the essence of the challenges faced in writing graduation research papers. It is also hoped that the present study encourages academics in universities to seriously consider the importance of teaching courses in writing research papers, as attention is paid to other academic skills.

It is suggested that further studies should be don the difficulties and challenges the face university undergraduate students not only of EFL / ESL majors, but of different fields.

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Diminution in Arabic: A suggested strategy to Mona Baker's non-equivalence problem “differences in form"

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Abstract

The study aimed at looking into the phenomenon of diminution in Arabic language as compared to affixes in English language in terms of structure and meaning. The study also investigates the relevance of diminutives in Arabic language to the problem of “differences in form” that Mona Baker discusses in her influential book, in Other Words. Baker argues that Arabic, among other languages, lacks a ready mechanism to overcome this equivalence problem of differences in form such as suffixes and prefixes at word level. By reference to benchmark books written by founding grammarians of Arabic language grammar and morphology as well as to recent relevant studies, the study concludes that diminutives in Arabic language possess a semantic and an aesthetic value and exhibit a host of meanings such as smallness, reduction, belittlement, endearment, approximation (time, distance), pity, and gentleness. Further, the study recommends that diminutive forms be incorporated as a strategy proposed to overcome the problem of differences in form, at some instances.

Keywords: Diminution; Mona Baker; strategy; mechanism; aesthetic value; belittlement

1. Introduction

In a world conspicuously characterized by global communication, translation plays a pivotal role, not least in the exchange of information and facilitating the access of information among languages. Understandably, there are differences among languages that only a proficient language user may distinguish. In spite of this expected disaccord of used forms among languages, each language has its own unique way of expressing and understanding the precise meaning of these forms.

Though there are copious examples, diminution has many forms in many languages, including Arabic, English, Spanish, Italian, to name but a few. For example, in Arabic language, the diminutive form of the word (bab) is (buwayb) (a small door). In any case, a wide range of meanings lies behind all forms of diminutives besides smallness, of course. Some diminutives are intended to express contempt or endearment, among other meanings. This study is intended to deal with diminutives formation process, their intended meanings in Arabic language, and compare them with the English language with their relevant applications to translation.

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1.1 Literature Review

Diminution is an ancient phenomenon common in most languages. However, because diminution is essentially a description, this phenomenon has been replaced at the present time by direct description (Hazimy, 2006), and only a few forms have remained. Highlighting the similarities and differences of diminutive forms in Arabic and English and shedding light on the meanings conveyed by them, Hamid; Faiq (2009) conclude that the two languages are very similar in terms of parts of speech and meaning, but they differ greatly in terms of the morphological process. Thus, while English resorts to prefixes, in the first place, and suffixes, Arabic relies on infixation, which is derived according to fixed rules determined by the morphological structure of the word to be minimized. English language forms diminutives either analytically by preceding a given word with an analytical marker (*small*, *little*, and *tiny*), or by adding a derivational affix (Bin Mukhashin, 2018). The latter is classified by some scholars as synthetic diminutives (-ie, -ette, -let, -kin, -een, -s, -poo) (Schneider, 2003). This formation process of attaching a derivational affix to mainly nouns does not change the word class of a given word. Consequently, while the meaning of the word undergoes changes, its word class remains intact. Only the form, the phonological shape, and the meaning of the word are modified. Though different in the formation process of diminutives, English and Arabic languages are similar in the meanings these diminutives impart. According to Bin Mukhashin (2018), diminutives in English language connote pejorative meaning, or meanings that indicate different aspects of smallness, affection and endearment. For instance, adding a derivational suffix to like -ette to a noun derives a new noun that conveys the meaning of “smaller in size”; the word kitchenette resultant from the addition of the derivational morpheme -ette is a smaller kitchen and cigarette is a small cigar (Katamba: 1993).

Most Arab grammarians agree that diminution in Arabic language serves a number of functions, and hence has a descriptive value (Ibn Usfur, 1972; Sibaweh, 1988; Ibn Ya’eesh, 643). Hazimy (2006) maintains that diminution is, after all, meaning, and meanings are not specific to a certain language or nation. Diminution is not merely a change in the form of a given word, but it connotes a specific meaning.

Diminution serves a variety of semantic functions such as preference, ridicule, affection, endearment, and contempt (Sibaweh, 1988; Ghazalli, 2012). Some scholars (Sibaweh, 1988; Yahya, 2012) argue that the use of diminution in Arabic is predominantly geared toward expressing contempt or belittlement. For them, the main dimension of diminution is decrease. Thus, it either indicates reduction of a person’s respect (disparagement), reduction of size, reduction in number, quantity, time period (approximation), reduction of spatial distance (approximation), or reduction of psychological barriers (pity, endearment, gentleness).

Diminution combines two means of expression in Arabic language, namely, derivation and formula (Yahya, 2012). It requires the addition of a consonant -y) in the middle of a word and consequently changes its pronunciation, so it is closer to a fixed formula than derivation.

As far as meaning is concerned, differences in form among languages can be considered as one of the problems that trainee students are likely to encounter at the word level (Baker, 2001). According to Baker (2001), English language uses forms such as prefixes and suffixes that, in addition to their propositional meaning, have an aesthetic significance. The problem arises when trying to reproduce this aesthetic value in other languages, among which is Arabic that lacks a ready mechanism that may preserve this aesthetic dimension.

1.2 Research questions

The status of Arabic language as a language equipped with tools that can be used as strategies to solve problems encountered by translators has yet to be understood. The problem of the study is mentioned in Mona Baker's influential book, In Other Words. There are many languages, including Arabic, which have no tools to solve the problem of differences in form in English language (Baker, 2001.p.24).

The present study is crucially intent on showing that Arabic language has certain forms that can be suggested as strategies to overcome some problems of equivalence.

1. Method

The study relies on two sources of information: primary and secondary sources. Equivalence problems at word level mentioned in Baker's book provide the primary sources. Secondary sources are obtained from books and articles related to the scope of the study. The study also draws on the descriptive model that consists of three steps: collecting information, objective comparison of collected information, and recourse to references, and primary and secondary information. Information analysis is carried out through looking into concepts related to translation problems and strategies in both Arabic and English languages.

2. Discussion

Diminution is a linguistic process that has long persisted and identified by linguists as a common practice in almost every language. Among the four major word-formation processes in English language is suffixation through which diminutive forms are produced (Hamid & Faiq, p. 2). Diminutive forms in English are created by adding suffixes like: -ette, -et, -let, -een, -erel (-rel), -ie (-i, -y), -kin (-ikin, -kins), and -ling to personal proper nouns or common nouns (Hamid & Faiq, p. 2; Marchand, 1969, p. 269; Zandvoort, 1972, p. 298). Italian is no exception in which evaluative affixes are employed to create a number of categories, including the diminutive (Hamid & Faiq, 2008, p. 2). The insertion of these evaluative suffixes to words in Italian neither changes the " syntactic category of the base (casa ' house' – casina ' little house') , nor its subcategorization (such as gender, number, actionality…) (Taine -Cheikh, 2018 , p.1).

Diminutives in English

Table 1. Native English Diminutives

Function	Diminutive Suffix	Example
Smallness	-let	Droplet, booklet, leaflet
Productive	/i/, -y, ie, i	Movie, Sally, Maggie, Dani
Accusative or feminine	-n, -en, -on	Chicken, kitten, maiden
Frequentative(express attitudes)	-le	Puddle, sparkle
disparative	-ish	Largish, reddish, smallish, tallish,
Babytalk assimilative	-sie, -sies, -sy	Bitsy, footsie, halfsies, onsies, popsy, teensy-weensy, tootsie, twosies, Betsy, Patsy, Robsy
American nicknaming	-o	Bucko, daddio, garbo, kiddo,

		smoko, wacko, Jacko, Ricko
Hypocoristic (affective meaning, normally used by men)	-er, -ers, -ster	Bonkers, preggers, starkers, Becker, Lizzers, Hankster, Patster
Geordie assimilative	-a	Gazza, Macca
Nicknames or endearment	-s	Lyds
Endearment	-poo	Katiepoo
Address between people with a close relationship	-pop	Rosiepops
Nursery words or sometimes pejorative	-peg	Daddypegs

Diminutives in English

Table 2. Loanwords and native English words using foreign-language diminutives

Patrinominative (Norse)	-ling	Darling, duckling, fingerling, gosling, underling
Insignificance (of humans)	-ling	peinceling
Small architectural feature (French)	-ette	Balconette, kitchenette
Comparative, pejorative (Franco-Latin)	-erel, -rel	Cockrel, coistrel, doggerel, ditterel, gangrel, hoggerel, kestrel,mackerel, minstrel, mongrel, pickerel, puckerel scoundrel, suckerel, taistrel, tumbrel, whimbrel, wastrel'
Hypocoristic/ Parent-child connection (Dutch)	-kins	Laurakins, Sallykins
Commercial miniature compound	Mini-, micro	Minibar, miniblind, miniboss, microcosm, microscope
Irish flavor	-een	Girleen, houseen

As tables (1) and (2) above show, diminutives in English language are formed either by preceding a noun with a prefix, or by adding a derivational affix. Affixes such as (–ie, –ette, and –let) are typical of contemporary English Language (Bin Mukhashin, 2018). Others are borrowed from other languages such as those that have a Germanic origin (-kin, - ling), or of an Irish origin (-een). They can exhibit a wide array of expressive meanings. Some of these affixes are inflected to express the meaning of smallness. Other affixes add an emotional dimension that expresses a pejorative stance of the language user, endearment, or depreciation and contempt. However, the most salient semantic aspects for which this large inventory of diminutive affixes is used are smallness and pejorative stance. The tables also show some affixes which are called familiarity markers that possess an expressive or evaluative attitude such as –s, –er, –o, –a, and –le, rather than showing qualities like smallness. (ibid.257-259)

Arabic language also has evaluative affixes that, once inflected, serve to create categories like the diminutive. In resemblance to Italian, Arabic diminutives have an inflectional specificity of changing only the semantics of the word, and no change in the syntactic or grammatical function of the word is in play, " Indeed, it is a type of double derivation which applies more or less similarly (infixation of the diphthong -ay-) to a very large number of different patterns without modifying their category or subcategory" (Taine - Cheikh, 2018, p.1). According to Zewi (2006, p. 638), the very process of diminution that Arabic conducts is also found in other semitic languages such as Biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, and Akkadian.

Diminution in Arabic

Diminution in Arabic language is a technique equivalent to description in any other language. The word that undergoes diminution in Arabic helps qualify the referent more specifically. According to Ibn Usfur (1972, p.317), " taṣġīr is inherently a description. For example, Rujail means a vile man" (Hazimy, 2006, p.6). If buyayt (a small house) is used in place of bayt (a house), the quality of size is emphasized here (Hazimy, 2006, p.6). Even more, some Arab authors paired description with diminution in their literary works, such as Taha Hussein, " و يوما لقيت في هذه كتيباً صغيراً " " One day, I found a small booklet" (Hazimy, 2006, p.8).

Table 3. Diminutives of Feminine Names in Arabic Language

Sing.F	Sing.F.Dim	Plur.F	Plur.F.Dim
Kalba(t) / bitch	Kulayba (t) / little bitch	Kalbat / bitches	Kulaybat/ little bitches
Waraqa / leaf	Wurayqa/ small leaf	Waraqat / leaves	Wurayqat small leaves
Ukht / sister	Ukhayya / little sister	Akhawat / sisters	Ukhayyat / little sisters

Forming Diminution (taṣġīr) in Arabic

Diminution (taṣġīr) is a process that involves the insertion of the diphthong -ay- " in a given position and for a given pattern" (Taine - Cheikh, 2018, p.21). These patterns vary depending on the root; trilateral, quadriliteral, or quinqueliteral " It is to be noted that (taṣġīr) has three patterns, 'fu'ayl, 'fu'ay'il', and 'fu'ay'eel'" (Sibaweh, 1988, p.105). The morphological process by which diminutives are formed is infixation, i.e. it takes place internally by inserting an affix to the root of a word (Abu-Mughli, 1987, p. 411). Understandably, the morphological structure of a given form restricts the user to certain fixed patterns for diminution to take place. The first basic pattern is 'fu'ayl', as in ' jabal' (a mountain)/ 'jubayl' (a small mountain), and 'kalb' (a dog) / ' kulayb' (small dog) . The second pattern, which is inflected based on the quadriliteral root of the word, is ' fu'ayil', as in ' aqrab' (a scorpion) becomes 'uqayrib' (a small scorpion. The third pattern, which is used with quinqueliteral roots, is ' fu'ay'eel', as in ' usfur' (a sparrow) that is diminuted as ' usayfeer' (a small sparrow).

Table 4. Diminutive Patterns in Arabic

Noun	**Diminutive**	**Diminutive Pattern**
Jabal	Jubayl	fu'ayl
kateb	kuwaytib	fu'ayil
dinar	dunayneer	fu'ay'eel

Table 5. Diminutives that indicate Place Names in Arabic Language

Place Name	**Diminutive**	**Meaning**
jayb	juwayb	A village name
Hujra(t)	Hujayra(t)	Small room
Ghurfa(t)	Ghurayfa(t)	Small room

Expressive Value of Diminution (taṣġīr)

The notion of (taṣġīr) is closely linked to evaluative morphology which was proposed by Scalise (1984: 132-3). According to Hazimy (2006), diminution is, after all, meaning, and meaning is not specific of one language than the other. In the same vein, Jackobson contends that "languages differ essentially in what they must convey and not in what they may convey" (Munday, 2001, p.37). (Taṣġīr) involves a change in the form of a word by adding a morpheme, and this mere addition aims at conveying an aspect of meaning. The diminutive –y is a morpheme that has a semantic value in Arabic, that when added to a word for diminution, it incurs an inevitable shift from one situation to another, and hence a change in meaning. In this regard, Ibn Jinni (1952) maintains, "If forms are taken to be the vehicle of meaning, and undergo some change by addition, such addition should ultimately indicate a new aspect of meaning" (p. 268).

Overall, Arab grammarians (Ibn Usfur, 1972; Al-Ghalayini, 2002; Sibaweh, 1988) enumerated a plethora of meanings that diminutives serve. The first evaluation relates to minimizing the number of something, as in tumajraat (a few dates). The second function which diminution serves is more or less similar to minimizing the status of someone or something, as in kuwaijtib (a less well-known writer) and kutajib (a short book). Third, to show contempt, such as rudʒail (a little man / in status or respect). The fourth and fifth functions deal with approximation of time (qubajl (a little before), buʕaid (a little after and of place (fuwaiq (a little above)), respectively. Later, Al-Ghalayini (2002) added the meaning of endearment and affection, as in bunaj (my little son).

Table 6. Arabic Diminutives: Meanings

Function	Examples
Small size	Jamal : camel / Jumayl : small camel
Small amount	Luqma :a morsel / Luqayma(t):a nibble
Belittlement	Shurti : policeaman / Shurayti: an insignificant policeman
Approximation of time	qabl: before / qubayl: a little before
Approximation of place	Fawq: above / fuwayq: a little above
Close relationship	Sahib : friend / suwayhib : a close friend
Grandeur	Dahiya(t) : shrewd / duwayhiya(t) : excessively shrewd
Endearment	Fahd : name of a person / fuhayd : nickname
enhancement	Malik: king/ Mulayk: a great king

However, some old Arab grammarians (Sibaweh, Ibn Ya'eesh, Ibn Al-Hajib, Al-Ulaymi, Al-Khalil) hold the view that the aspect of contempt is regarded as nearly the overriding feature that distinguishes diminution. "It is to be noted that diminution and belittlement are interchangeable, for they are the opposite of grandeur." (Ibn Ya'eesh,643, p.289). "A word to which a diminutive is added indicates belittlement", (Nahwi, 1982, p.196-197). Yahya (2013: 17) concludes that the core dimension of diminution is the semantic one as it indicates belittlement (contempt or degradation), diminishment in size, decrease in number or quantity, decrease of time period or distance, or alleviating psychological barriers (pity or endearment). Furthermore, diminutives are systematically devised based on fixed patterns where this choice largely depends on phonetic, semantic, or even rhythmic scales that contribute to enhancing the aesthetic element.

The aforementioned purposes and semantic aspects of diminutives that the grammarians listed were not absent from Sibaweh's regard as he discussed them in his book. Yet, he reckons that belittlement and contempt are predominantly the prime expressive values for which diminutives are mostly resorted to in Arabic language. Diminution or (taṣġīr), for that matter, means in Arabic belittlement and decrease, so if something becomes small, it will decrease in size.

Difference in form among languages is an inevitable outcome in any incident of cross-linguistic transference. In his attempt to explore the nature of equivalence, Jackobson concludes that in any message equivalent in meaning between two languages, " the code-units will be different since they belong to two different sign systems which partition reality differently, (Munday, 2001, p. 37). For Jackobson (1959, p. 129), obligatory grammar and lexicon result in cross-linguistic differences among languages. However, languages can still communicate the intended meaning by using a host of equivalent forms, "…the problem of meaning and equivalence thus focuses on differences in the structure and terminology of languages rather than on any inability of one language to render a message that has been written in another verbal language"(Munday, 2001, p.37)".

Addressing the issue of equivalence, Mona Baker in her influential book, In Other Words, A coursebook on translation, devotes one of the chapters to exploring equivalence at word level. " Potential areas of difficulty in translation" are pinpointed through the discussion of problems that are caused by " lack of equivalence at word level" (Baker, 2001, p.10). Differences in form is a problem that arises from lack of equivalent forms (affixes) in the target language. The difficulty that these forms pose is not grounded on any inability of rendering the propositional meaning. This can be coped for by an appropriate paraphrase. What is intricate here is that these affixes are used based on their aesthetic value; "contribute to evoked meaning (washateria, carpeteria, and groceteria)" or those which "convey expressive meaning (journalese, translationese, and legalese)"(Baker, 2001, p. 24). Arabic, among other languages, is exemplified as lacking a ready mechanism to deal with such forms, and ends up with the Arab translator to only render the propositional meaning by paraphrase. At other instances, such as the case with forms that convey evoked or expressive meaning, even paraphrase is unattainable.

What this paper intends to prove is that Arabic does have ready mechanisms to relay additional aspects of meaning in addition to a given form's propositional meaning. Diminution, for instance, is one such mechanism that can be proposed as a strategy for the problem of differences of form that Baker mentions in her book. If a word like "translationese" refers to "a stilted form" of writing that often reflects "disapproval ", the Arabic word "turaijimah " may be used as an equivalent. Clearly, turaijimah is a diminuted form of the word "tarjamah" and it is inflected by the infixation of the diphthong - ay -. Equally obviously, this change from tarjamah to turaijimah incurs changes on the semantic level of the word. The diminuted form "turaijimah" suggests a form of writing lower in status than tarjamah.

3. Conclusion

The preceding discussion on diminution reveals that diminutive forms in Arabic language have a host of meanings that, in addition to reduction, express smallness, contempt, approximation (time, distance), pity, endearment, and gentleness. The study also shows that diminutive forms in Arabic, like affixes in English, are also a type of derivation. It further suggests that diminutives can be used as a solution to some equivalence problems at word level. The problem of differences in form suggested by Baker in her influential book, In Other Words, provides a prime example. Due to their semantic and aesthetic character, diminutive forms may serve as a ready mechanism to overcome the problem of differences in form.

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The mixed curriculum approach (MCA): A reflection from the learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at Majmaah University

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Abstract

How best to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has been a complicated issue that has bedeviled curricula designing. Starting from the argument that today’s EFL curricula do need a complete overhaul to reflect the recurrent debate about culture clash and culture cooperation. This study offers an alternative to those who advocate either “blending” or “incorporating” culture studies into EFL curricula; it seeks to fill the gap between these two approaches, as it argues for the viability and relevance of a Mixed Curriculum Approach (MCA). It applies this new MCA method to the case study of a Majmaah English department by administering an open-ended questionnaire, and the findings show that the overall majority of the students surveyed are interested in learning about the corresponding culture of the very foreign language they are learning. The findings also demonstrate the EFL learners’ wish to see their curriculum revised into an MCA one, corroborating the major argument that EFL curricula ought not to be fixated to outdated theories, and therefore need to adapt to today’s EFL teaching requirements, which is itself a recommendation for future curricula designers.

Keywords: EFL teaching; EFL curriculum; MCA; culture studies; culture clash; cultural appropriation; Majmmah; English Department

1. Introduction

The globalized education setting of the 21st century is undergoing profound changes and urgently needs curriculum adjustments to enhance the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL). Contemporary issues of language and culture, as well as their complex influence on our understanding of the other, comprise an updated EFL curriculum priority at a time when the world is becoming ever more interconnected, like a small village. A major concern in modern EFL instruction is how to apply the knowledge generated in the classroom to comprehend target culture constructions, which are like lenses through which we grasp matters of gender, class, and ethnicity in our respective cultural contexts. Human language reflects its speakers’ lifestyles and beliefs, given the extent of language’s influence on culture (and vice versa). Therefore, acknowledging the link between EFL teaching and the target culture requires reviewing EFL curricula, which should help EFL learners see how diverse aspects of culture can dialectically affect language.

In the past—and with the widespread application of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in recent decades—English instruction has focused on how to teach the language to attain the

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communicative competence required to convey meaning (even in a confused, hurried way purportedly aimed at meeting labor market needs). To become proficient in a foreign language, one should not merely develop speaking skills to the detriment of what Kovacks (2017) calls the “fifth skill” (p. 74); that is socio-cultural competence. After all, communicative adeptness “requires the active involvement of the learner in the production of the target language” through cultural exposure (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995; Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 1).

By its very nature as a cross-disciplinary sphere, culture studies have a significant influence on undergraduate students, especially on learners of English as a Foreign Language. Learning English through culture is the new trend in cross-disciplinary fields, as culture is an integral part of the overall learning process. Gabriella Kovacs argues that “learning a language means also the study of a different culture” (pp. 73-86); hence, the inextricable link between learning a foreign language and absorbing its corresponding culture. The latter reflects essential aspects of a society whose cultural and educational characteristics merge into its language. This connection is better expressed by Claire Kramsch in her book *Culture in Foreign Language Teaching*, in which she states that “language is not a bunch of arbitrary linguistic forms applied to a cultural reality that can be found outside of language…[w]ithout language and other symbolic systems, the habits, beliefs, institutions, and monuments that we call culture would be just observable realities, not cultural phenomena” (Kramsch, 2010, p. 62). Equally important, in 2018, for the first time, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) addressed the need for “pluricultural education” (Council of Europe, 2018)[i] involving linguistic as well *cultural* aspects, skills, and declarative knowledge.

Accordingly, communicative competence (which the CEFRL is referring to) encompasses a variety of skills, such as the following: (1) *Linguistic competence* involves making grammatically correct sentences. (2) *Socio-cultural competence* entails behaving appropriately in a given cultural context (including the commitment to the target culture’s social rules). In other words, successful communication takes more than skill-based proficiency; it also requires awareness of the target culture. This is the definition of what this article calls the mixed curriculum approach (MCA).

2. The Mixed Curriculum Approach (MCA)

The MCA argument is concurrent with the requirements of the 21st-century overhaul of EFL instructional techniques. It is grounded in the EFL cultural approach, thereby becoming a critical element in most EFL curricula nowadays, which is the essence of what is commonly dubbed “culture-spiced communicative competence”. It is from this standpoint that the idea of introducing cultural courses in EFL curricula has emerged, and has continued to gain momentum, especially during a reviving debate on the clash/cooperation between cultures and civilizations. The MCA stems from the need to raise learners’ awareness of the value of knowing about the target culture of the language they are learning, and of the evolving nature of cultural awareness among the learners involved. The MCA helps to develop learners’ critical thinking, evokes their emotions, and aids them in building up the structure of their knowledge. The urgent need for—and viability of—the MCA stem from the fact that culture is something we live with through our daily habits, our self-perception, and our perspective of the other as defined by T.S Eliot (1948, p. 120). The MCA is philosophically based on Peeters’s argument that “culture is everywhere” (2020, pp.1-14). Exposure to foreign cultures helps students learn to display a level of personal maturity by respecting others’ views, experiences, and dialects, as cultural awareness is a crucial facet of personal and academic maturity. Thus, the MCA in EFL instruction strengthens the process of transmitting language skills by facilitating EFL learners’ knowledge of a language’s corresponding cultural values (Peeters, 2016, pp. 139-142).

3. Previous Studies

However, the general question of integrating culture in EFL curricula is not new in the realm of applied linguistics. The issue has been debated by a panoply of pundits in the field, such as Si Thang Kiet Ho (2009) from Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand, who talks about the "inseparability of language and culture, and the need to prepare language learners for intercultural communication in an increasingly multicultural world". Si Thang Kiet Ho conducted a case study on the effect of intercultural language learning on EFL students in Vietnam. His sample comprised two traditional EFL textbook units currently used in a Vietnamese university, and his objective was to raise learners' cultural awareness and engage "them cognitively, behaviorally and affectively in cultur[al] learning" (pp. 63-76). His findings emerged in the form of suggesting what cultural components "may be implemented in any language course and [which are] appropriate for the study of any target culture" (ibid).

Gabriella Kovacks, from the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, in her 2017 book *Culture in Language Teaching: A Course Design for Teacher Trainees*—which is a benchmark for the foundation of MCA—stresses Si Thang Kiet Ho's inextricable link between EFL teaching and target culture awareness. Kovacks (2017) maintains that "the role and status of culture in language teaching has always been a challenging issue for teachers. Their conception and opinion may be very different regarding the meaning of culture and the possibilities of incorporating cultural content into the language teaching process" (p.73). Furthermore, Kovacs provides a teachers' guide (for what this paper calls an MCA course design) on how to implement a culture-enriched curriculum that includes aspects such as teaching target language proverbs, role-playing, and simulations.

Moreover, Ralph W. Tyler, in his book *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*, also offers a guiding reference related to curriculum design, with a focus on the MCA's significance in an increasingly globalized world. Peter S. Hlebowitsh, in writing about Tyler's book, asserts that the "curriculum should be dynamic, a program under constant evaluation and revision. Curriculum has always been thought of as a static, set program" (Hlebowitsh, Forword in Tyler, 2013, pp. 1-3); hence the need to have curricula that keep abreast of socio-cultural changes in an ever more heated debate about culture clashes. Tyler also encourages "curriculum planning [to be] a continuous, cyclical process, an instrument of education that needs to be fine-tuned" (ibid). A curriculum that is "fine-tuned" from time to time is what "future language teachers should be trained to formulate…regarding the cultural content of the curriculum and [to] develop specific cultural activities according to their objectives" (Hlebowitsh, Forword in Tyler, 2013, pp-1-3).

However, the MCA should not be confused with what Alptekin (2002) and Chia-Lin Hsin (2008) advocate in terms of separating language from culture. For Alptekin, "teaching the target language culture may impede learners' indulgence of language, as they have to manage with unknown vocabulary items, as well as cultural items which are alien to them" (Abahussain, 2020, pp. 119-132). Yet Alptekin could not address the paradox of the feasibility of separating language from culture, and how to reconcile the paradoxical argument that a foreign language for EFL learners is not alien, but that its corresponding culture is. The claim that EFL students cannot "get rid of their culture deliberately" (Alptekin, 2002, p.) is not very sound because teaching the target culture does not necessarily mean erasing one's native culture. Both processes complete—instead of contradicting—each other, for it is not conceivable to teach a foreign language without referring to its corresponding culture (Brown, 1994[ii]; Kramsch, 2013).

In a comprehensive guide (published in 2016) on how to integrate cultural components into curriculum planning, Grace C. Offorma amply discusses the general convergence whereby "culture is an important factor in curriculum planning and drives the content of every curriculum" (Offorma, 2016, p. 1). Offorma bases her assertion on why curriculum planners ought to embed emerging cultures in their respective curricula on the assumption that since societies are becoming more dynamic, "there are new cultures that should be included in the curriculum to make the learners *functional members of the society*" (*italics* added) (ibid).

Yet again, the MCA differs from the claim of "integrating" language and culture in EFL instruction. This is an outdated rationale because it dates back to the late 1950s and is no longer valid given the evolution of inter-cultural debate and the rise of populist theories on the clash of cultures and civilizations (Fukayama, 1989; Huntington, 1993; Lewis, 2002 & 2004). This critical moment in world history requires an immediate wake-up call to counter the culture clash argument by underscoring the value of exposing students to foreign cultures, especially EFL learners who need a deeper, broader view of the corresponding cultural facade of the foreign langue they are learning. Therefore, simply "integrating" language and culture is no longer sufficient if we were to highlight the value of culture dialogue (instead of culture clashes). Introducing *independent* cultural topics in EFL curricula (which this article calls the MCA) with a substantial ratio is the only way to meet rapidly changing educational needs. For instance, EFL curricula cannot remain fixated on an archaic theory (that is more than 50 years old) of merely "integrating" or "embedding" cultural topics into reading material.

Hence the major focus of this work. This article envisions an MCA strategy in EFL teaching, and because the MCA neither "blends" nor "incorporates" cultural studies into EFL curricula, it seeks to fill the gap between the two approaches. This work explores the MCA's viability and relevance by applying this new method to the case study of an English department whose curriculum is exclusively skill-based. This article contends that the best results from such a study could be achieved if EFL learners themselves were given the chance to express their own views on the proposed MCA.

4. Research Questions

This paper's primary goal is to examine the validity of adopting the MCA approach in the EFL curriculum at the English Department, College of Education in Majmaah, Majmaah University, and addresses three main research questions:

1- To what extent are EFL learners at the department concerned familiar with basic culture concepts?

2- Are students interested in the MCA curriculum?

3- What is the degree of cultural awareness among intermediate and advanced EFL learners in the department involved?

5. Methodology

Although "there is no clear consensus on the criteria for qualitative research methodologies in applied linguistics" (Tojo et al., 2017, p. 37), this article adopts Benson's framework of quantitative research and qualitative data analysis (Benson, 2012). Accordingly, this study opted for a questionnaire instead of the outdated technique of presupposing a question and then trying to look for corroborating evidence, because the latter is no longer valid for highly controversial topics in the post-modern 21^{st}-century research methodology. This is in line with the ethnographic[2] qualitative approach (which is the more commonly used method in culturalist research), since it verifies the choice of a questionnaire for gathering data (Hammersley as cited in Reeves et Al., 2013,). The reasons behind opting for the ethnographic approach include its focus on scrutinizing the nature of a particular socio-cultural issue, rather than establishing hypotheses about it in advance. Moreover, unstructured data

[2] Ethnography is a method in qualitative research that does not presuppose any conclusions beforehand. It relies on observations first, then it opts for a panoply for empirical methods in data collection, such as interviews, questionnaires, and documentaries.

(versus a closed set of coded data) is another idiosyncratic feature of ethnographic studies, which applies to the central question of this article: whether mixing EFL curricula with distinctive cultural subjects is relevant in the context of the currently universal culture-clash mood. That is why this article does not hypothesize about the outcomes of the questionnaire. It starts with an unstructured set of data, which means that the surveyed students could randomly answer the questions themselves, without any influence or pressure.

5.1 Setting and Participants

The data were collected from 30 EFL learners, nearly one-fifth of all students enrolled in an 8-level/4-year undergraduate English program at Majmaah English Department, Majmaah University, Riyadh, KSA. All of them are males between 20 and 22 years old. The samples included 10 students from Level 4 (out of 19 students) and 20 students from levels 7 and 8 (out of 24 and 27, respectively). Levels 7 and 8 are taken together as one unit of measurement since they are graduating EFL learners who supposedly have a more mature cultural awareness and more advanced academic knowledge of cultural studies. Also, the sample from levels 7 and 8 is double that of Level 4 because this paper sought to investigate the views of as many graduating students as possible, given their intellectual maturity and academic advancement compared to their peers at Level 4.

5.2 Research Design

A survey was conducted in February and March of 2020 during the academic year 2019/2020 in the English Department mentioned above. The survey was administered in the form of a questionnaire targeting both intermediate and advanced students to provide a broader representation within the same department. The thesis could only be addressed by surveying the target audience (i.e., EFL learners) to obtain their opinions on the MCA’s validity in the culture clash era. Since cultural awareness varies across students, from a pedagogical angle, it was practical to use a questionnaire so that we could examine EFL learners’ respective knowledge of the target culture, which guided us on how to fill in the curriculum lacuna of the English Department at Majmaah University.

5.3 Data Collection

The questionnaire consisted of three sets of questions. The first, *Yes/No questions,* sought to fathom learners’ basic knowledge of cultural studies and to survey their preferences regarding whether they may have been interested in seeing their curriculum include cultural subjects. Equally important, these questions revealed whether they thought cultural studies, as an inclusive discipline, was relevant to their academic future. The second set of questions involved a *choice question* aimed at finding out what kinds of cultural topics the students were most interested in. This category tried to mimic the university subject catalogs used in major Western universities where students choose the topics they would like to study, rather than having a curriculum-closed package imposed on them. The third set of questions, *reflective questions,* tried to discern EFL learners’ (intermediate Level 4 and advanced levels 7 and 8 alike) comprehensive cultural awareness by asking them to reflect on culture and cultural hegemony in general.

The questionnaire was peer-reviewed and approved by Dr. Jack Shindler, Professor of Education and Director of the International Program at North Central College in Chicago, the US; Professor Mounir Triki, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Sfax in Tunisia; and Professor Ken Kashiwagui, Associate Professor at the University of Tsukuba in Japan. This paper sought to have the questionnaire reviewed by academic authorities from three different universities and from three different continents to make sure that the content and verbiage covered most of the pertinent questions related to the thesis. The reviewers' revisions and remarks added a great deal to improve the questionnaire both in form and content.

5.4 Data Analysis

The "complexity and diversity of qualitative research" (Tojo et al., 2017, p. 37) make the task of "clarifying and categorizing types of qualitative research in language teaching and learning" rather challenging. Nevertheless, this study has adopted a content analysis approach (Benson, 2013 Nassaji 129-132, 2015) to "accommodate this complexity of language teaching and learning" (Tojo et al., 2017, p. 37), as the bulk of the data are thoroughly qualitative.

A four-step qualitative content analysis was applied to analyze the data gathered from the questionnaire (Chik et al., 2009, pp. 79–90). First, patterns were observed and interpreted. Second, the link between the research questions and data was obtained. Third—and most importantly—the students' responses were coded into or "Yes" and "No" for the Yes/No Questions Set, and into "right," "wrong," and "mixed" for the Reflective Questions Set according to Terry Eagleton's inclusive definition of culture "as the whole complex of a society's arts, manners, religion and ideas" (Eagleton, 2000, p. 107). Given its inclusive nature and comprehensive parameters, this paper employs Eagleton's definition of culture as a benchmark in evaluating and grading the students' responses. Fourth, patterns and connections between answers were identified in a way that should address the major research questions, specifically the MCA's validity and relevance in this case.

Once the data were compiled, an external examiner[3] from an unrelated department was asked to grade the students' answers into "right," "wrong," or "mixed" to avoid bias and guarantee the validity of the findings. Next, the results were processed and quantified into graphs and analyzed through SPSS, which is "data accountable" and verifiable (Larson-Hall, 2017, p.266). The purpose is to build graphics that "help researchers improve the way they understand and analyze [the] data, and to build credibility in numerical statistical analyses and the conclusions that are drawn" (Larson-Hall, 2017, p.253).

6. Results

The questionnaire sought to achieve two key objectives: First, to quantify cultural studies awareness among two categories of EFL Learners (intermediate Level 4 and advanced levels 7 and 8) at a Saudi university, and to compare their basic cultural knowledge. The primary objective of testing the concerned students' responses was to determine if there was a pressing need to modify EFL curricula based on the MCA, which would address the rising challenges of today's discourse on education reform and development. The results are dealt with according to their respective categories—basic knowledge (*Yes/No*) questions), one choice question, and reflective opinions—instead of numerical order in the original questionnaire, which was designed to be a set of randomly organized varieties of questions for EFL students to help them be more comfortable expressing themselves and responding to questions as they chose.

6.1 Measuring Cultural Studies Awareness Among EFL Learners at the Intermediate Level 4:

1. Yes/No Questions

Question 3. Do you think that language is part of a culture?

[3] The contact information of the external examiner is available upon request.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	9	90,0	90,0	90,0
	No	1	10,0	10,0	100,0
	Total	10	100,0	100,0	

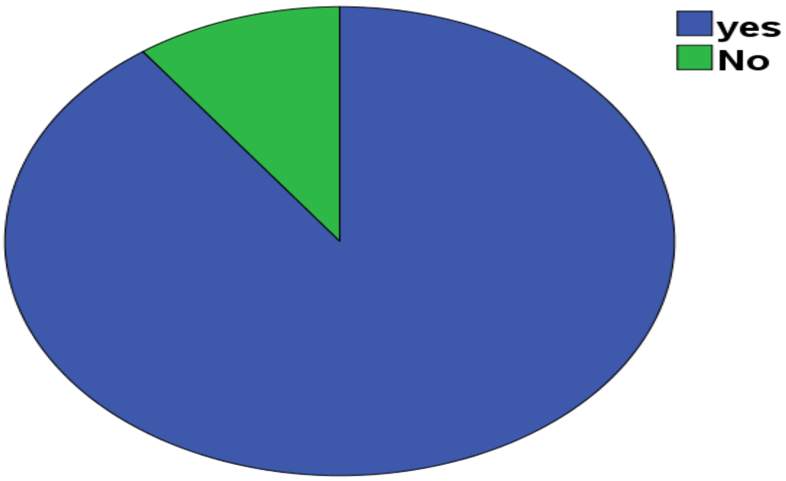

Figure 3. Do you think that language is part of a culture?

Question 4. As a foreign language learner, would you like cultural studies to be included in your curriculum?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	6	60,0	60,0	60,0
	No	4	40,0	40,0	100,0
	Total	10	100,0	100,0	

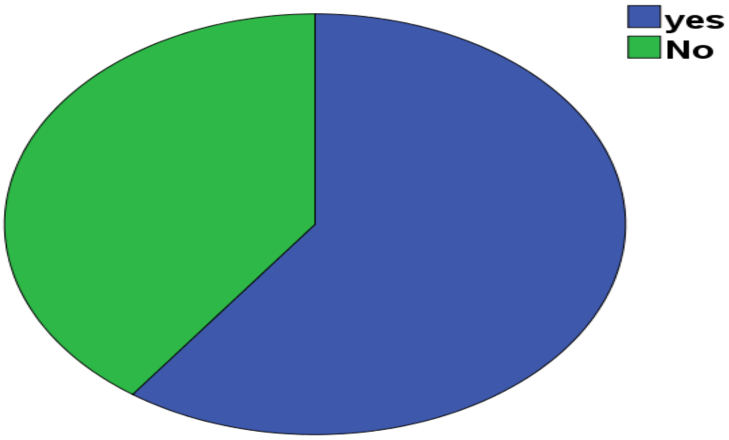

Figure 4. As a foreign language learner, would you like cultural studies to be included in your curriculum?

Question 6. Can you name one of the influential figures in the field of cultural studies?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid wrong	10	100,0	100,0	100,0

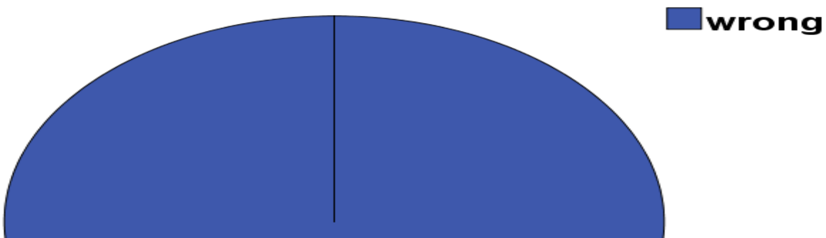

Figure 6. Can you name one of the influential figures in the field of cultural studies?

According to the results of Question 3, almost 90% of the students are aware that language is part and parcel of culture; paradoxically, their curriculum is exclusively skill-based. Although they have been exposed to cultural studies debates, for Level 4 EFL learners in the department involved (including the link between language and culture), cultural discussions are limited. They have a high awareness of cultural studies, seemingly relying on their general knowledge and casual interpretations.

The gap between the 90% (from Question 3) who believe that language is part of the culture and the 60% (from Question 4) who prefer that cultural studies topics be included in their curriculum can be explained by the fact that the students surveyed are concerned that if unfamiliar cultural topics are abruptly included in their curriculum, this might create a serious challenge for them to earn an A grade in as many subjects as possible, which is understandably a major priority for students around the world.

For Question 6, the students were asked whether they could name an important figure in cultural studies. The striking outcome is that no student could come up with any prominent name in the field, thus reflecting a chronic knowledge deficit in a realm so deeply related to the foreign language they are learning. Ironically, 90% of them think that language is part of the culture and that the two are therefore inseparable, but none of them could name a cultural studies figure, which raises a hypothetical question: What if they were given the chance to gain exposure to cultural studies? If these motivated EFL students had had substantive cultural topics included in their curriculum, they would have excelled in a sphere that is inextricably tied to their academic specialty.

1. The Choice Question

Question 5. Choose one of your favorite subjects

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Social identity/social groups in the united states	1	10,0	10,0	10,0
	The 1950s and the baby boomers	1	10,0	10,0	20,0
	cinema and music	6	60,0	60,0	80,0
	British life and culture	2	20,0	20,0	100,0
	Total	10	100,0	100,0	

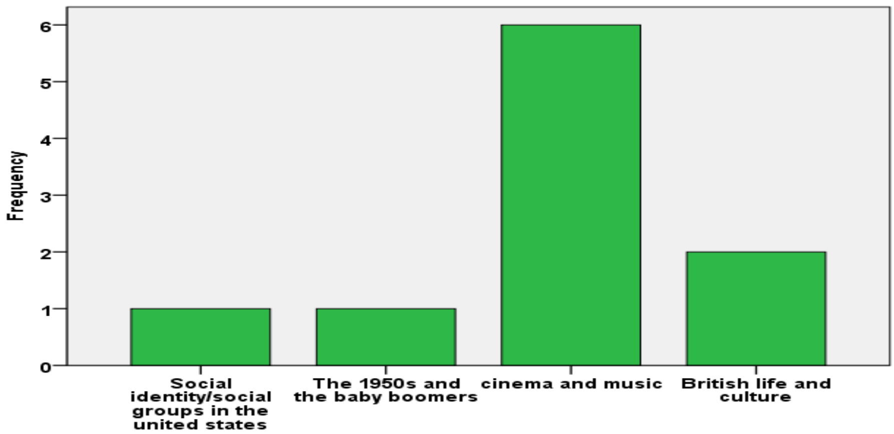

Figure 5. Choose one of your favorite subjects

Given the respondents' age range (20 to 22 years old), unsurprisingly, the majority of them chose *Cinema and Music* over other potential cultural topics to be included in their curriculum. We live in an open world where people in general—and EFL learners in particular—spend more time on social media, Netflix, and most important of all, popular TV channels like MBC 2 in the Middle East. Their extensive exposure to these forms of entertainment explains why the students chose entertaining subjects over controversial, intellectual topics like *Social Identity in the United States*.

1. Opinion Questions

Question 1. Could you define culture?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	right	4	40,0	40,0	40,0
	wrong	6	60,0	60,0	100,0
	Total	10	100,0	100,0	

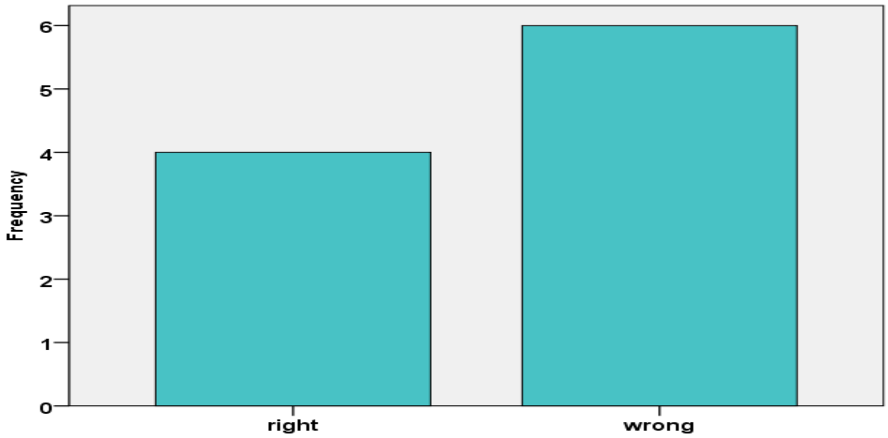

Figure 1. Could you define culture?

Question 2. Would you like to know about others' cultures? Why?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	9	90,0	90,0	90,0
	No	1	10,0	10,0	100,0
	Total	10	100,0	100,0	

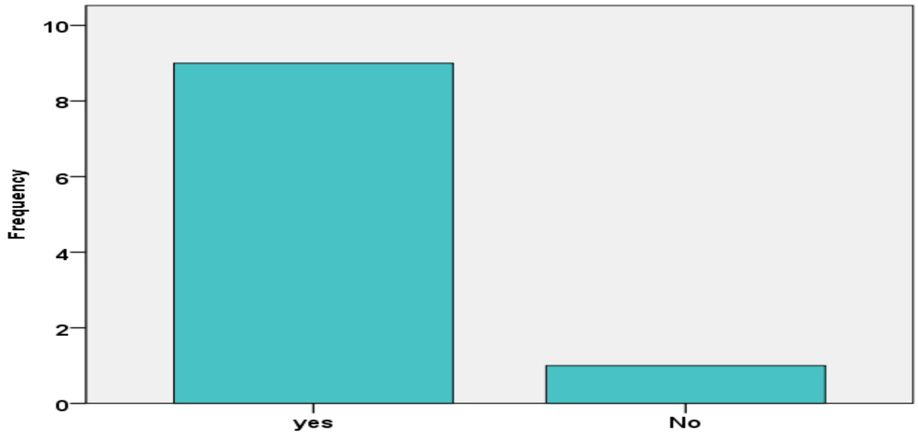

Figure 2. Would you like to know about others' cultures? Why?

Question 7. What is cultural hegemony?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	right	2	20,0	20,0	20,0
	wrong	5	50,0	50,0	70,0
	mixed answer	3	30,0	30,0	100,0
	Total	10	100,0	100,0	

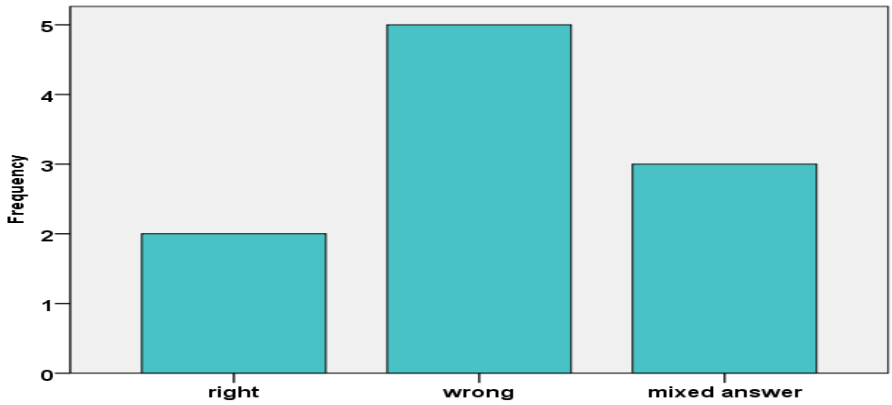

Figure 7. What is cultural hegemony?

The outcome for Question 1 (a question of basic knowledge) is that the majority of the students surveyed could not define a standard term in cultural studies, such as "culture." The controversy around cultural studies stems from the polemical nature of the word "culture," but not to the point of the students being incapable of giving a satisfactory definition of it. A sample of the hard copy of the students' responses to some key questions in the questionnaire will be shared in the Appendices; it demonstrates the extent of the knowledge gap among EFL learners about simple cultural concepts. The author of this study believes that this foundational knowledge deficit is due to many factors, especially an exclusively skill-based curriculum that focuses on teaching basic language skills, in addition to several advanced linguistics subjects later on. This one-sided curriculum is no longer suitable in the rapidly changing context of educational reform and the revision of outdated curricula that separate language from culture.

The 90% “Yes” response to Question 2 further shows that students are aware of their knowledge deficit regarding cultural studies. Fortunately, most of them have expressed interest in learning more about foreign cultures. Such awareness was deconstructed and discussed in the previous section, given the 100% failure (for Question 6) to name any well-known figure in the field.

In the Yes/No section, we saw the findings for Question 4, where almost 60% of the students would like to see their curriculum diversified to reflect their academic interests and future study plans. Here is another noticeable paradox between the results of questions 2 and 4. Between the 90% who expressed interest in learning more about foreign cultures, and the smaller share of 60% who preferred the MCA, a gap reveals the students’ reluctance to engage in new cultural studies topics that they may fail, given their unfamiliarity with the nature and requirements of such courses.

The most challenging query was Question 7, which asked the students to define “cultural hegemony,” a highly controversial idea in light of the re-emerging debate over a purported conflict between cultures, in a heated context where each side claims culture superiority. Only a few of the students grasped this polemical notion, which is not surprising given EFL learners’ lack of exposure to heavy cultural concepts. It is time to revisit EFL curricula and to adopt an MCA that would broaden the learners’ horizons, opening up new paths of knowledge and research prospects. Since “Cultural Studies is not one thing…[and] it has never been one thing” (Stuart Hall, Quoted in Hua Hsu, The New Yorker, 2017), it is not a single source of knowledge given its multi-disciplinarity character. Given the chance to learn more about timely cultural issues, EFL learners would have a better chance to become “functional members of society” in Offorma’s words (2016, p.74) with opinions of their own.

6.1. Measuring Cultural Studies Awareness Among EFL Learners at the Advanced Levels of 7 and 8:

As expected, the results of the more advanced levels differed from those of the lower levels within the same department. This is due to the higher intellectual awareness and academic maturity of these advanced EFL learners. However, this does not distort the finding of nearly the same knowledge deficit regarding cultural studies, as observed among their peers at Level 4 via the questionnaire.

1. The Yes/No Questions

Question 3. Do you think that language is part of a culture**?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	right	17	85,0	85,0	85,0
	wrong	2	10,0	10,0	95,0
	mixed response	1	5,0	5,0	100,0
	Total	20	100,0	100,0	

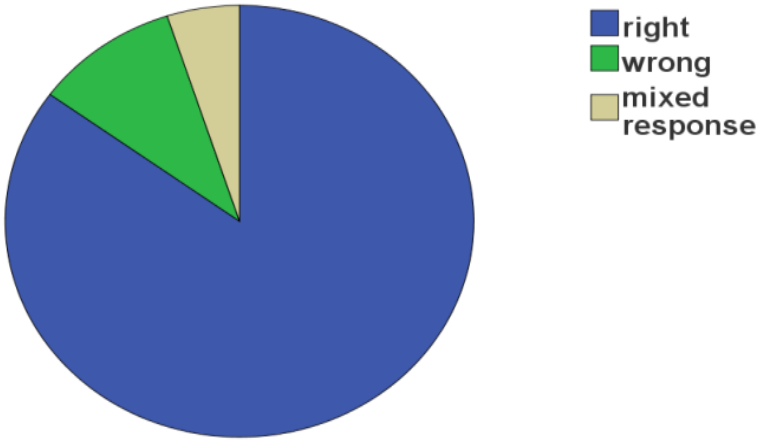

Figure 3. Do you think that language is part of a culture?

Question 4. As a foreign language learner, would you like cultural studies to be included in your curriculum? Why?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	right	11	55,0	55,0	55,0
	wrong	4	20,0	20,0	75,0
	mixed response	5	25,0	25,0	100,0
	Total	20	100,0	100,0	

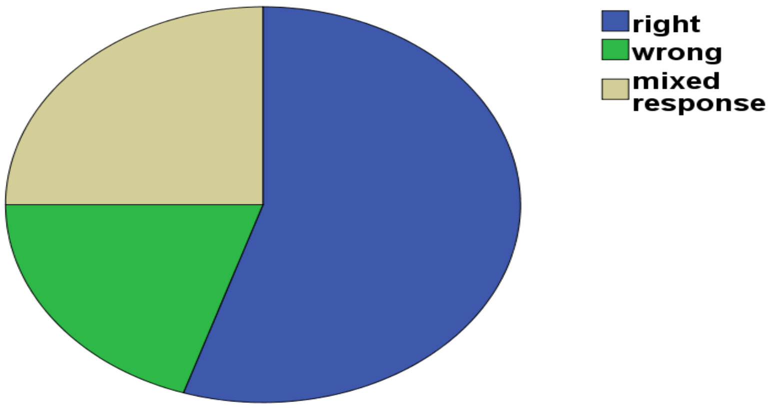

Figure 4. As a foreign language learner, would you like cultural studies to be included in your curriculum? Why?

Question 6. Can you name one of the influential figures in the field of cultural studies?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	wrong	20	100,0	100,0	100,0

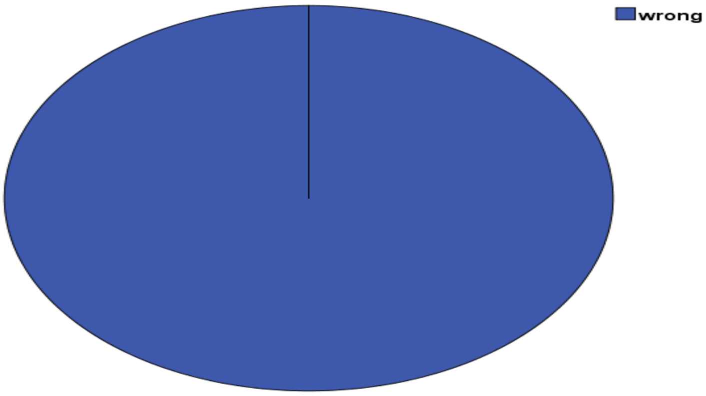

Figure 6. Can you name one of the influential figures in the field of cultural studies?

According to the outcomes for Question 3, almost 70% of the students believe that language and culture are deeply intertwined, 20% have the opposite view, and 10% did not answer the question. The 70% majority substantiates the major point this study is trying to make about the inextricable link between teaching a foreign language and its corresponding culture. It simply does not make sense to teach English to EFL learners separately from the language's cultural context(s).

The results of Question 4 support the analysis of the findings for Question 3 (mentioned above), the smaller majority notwithstanding. Most of the students would approve of having the MCA teaching approach by including independent cultural topics in their curriculum. However, we see the same gap, as is the case with Level 4, between the 70% majority, who believe that language is part of the culture (for Question 3), and the smaller proportion of around 55% (for Question 4), who would like to see cultural topics in their prospective curriculum. This is almost the same explanation of such a gap, which is that EFL learners who have had very little exposure to cultural studies subjects are afraid that including them might add obstacles in terms of passing their exams and earning high grades during their graduation path, simply because they are not familiar with taking cultural studies exams.

As for Question 6, strangely enough, there was a 100% failure rate among the two levels (7 and 8), like their peers at Level 4. Not a single student could name an influential figure in the realm of cultural studies, even those who are supposed to be well-known such as Samuel Huntington, Bernard Lewis, and Francis Fukayama, given the ongoing debate they have elicited about the clash of cultures and civilizations since the mid-1990s. This is worrisome from the perspective of this paper, as graduates of English are completely unaware of such timely and dangerous discourse on the clash of civilizations. These would-be graduates may find themselves during such a dispute when/if they enroll in a Master's or a Ph.D. program in an English-speaking country.

1. *The Choice Question*

Question 5. Choose one of your favorite subjects

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Social identity/social groups in the united states	3	15,0	15,0	15,0
	American immigration history	1	5,0	5,0	20,0
	Britain's modern culture	4	20,0	20,0	40,0
	cinema and music	10	50,0	50,0	90,0
	British life and culture	2	10,0	10,0	100,0
	Total	20	100,0	100,0	

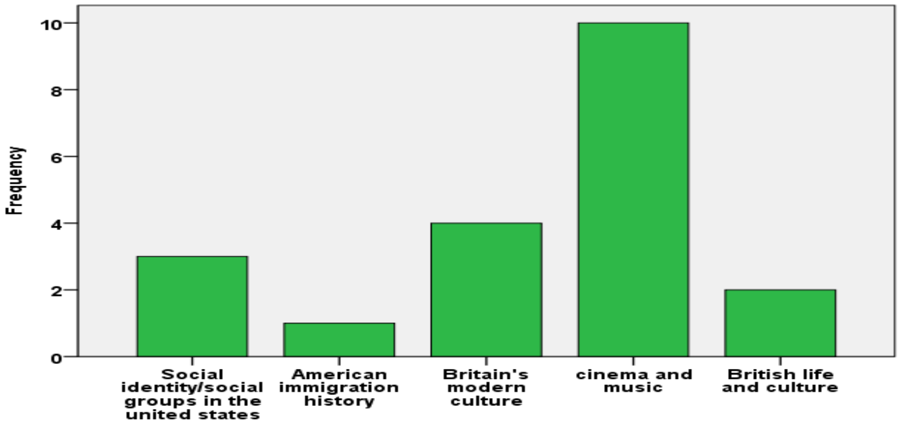

Figure 5. Choose one of your favorite subjects

As the outcomes of Question 5 show, the findings illustrate that students at Levels 7 and 8 are not unlike their Level 4 peers. Most of the learners surveyed prefer *Cinema and Music* as their favorite cultural topic in a prospective MCA teaching approach. Again, given their same age range as their peers at Level 4, they almost have similar preferences for entertainment topics (versus intellectual ones). This is not surprising, as it is natural for youngsters to prefer entertainment over debatable intellectual issues, such as the melting pot controversy in American society. However, a few students chose controversial matters, such as the theme of *Social identity in the United States* and *British life and culture*, which is an encouraging sign of their readiness to engage in the MCA.

These findings support the main argument of this study. Cultural studies are necessary for curriculum design because it is a multi-disciplinary field that includes highly advanced intellectual topics and at the same time entertainment subjects that would motivate EFL learners in terms of coming to grips with today's educational reality: that learning about foreign cultures is as important as learning their corresponding foreign languages. In other words, "the way language is used affects the way we think about and perceive the world. In other words, worldviews and cultural influences are largely embedded within the language we use" (Khan Academy, 2018).

The responses to Question 5 do support the results of Questions 3 and 4, which underscore a strong belief among the students that learning foreign languages and cultures should not be separate because they complete (rather than contradict) each other.

2. The Opinion Questions

Question 1. Could you define culture?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	right	3	15,0	15,0	15,0
	wrong	8	40,0	40,0	55,0
	mixed response	9	45,0	45,0	100,0
	Total	20	100,0	100,0	

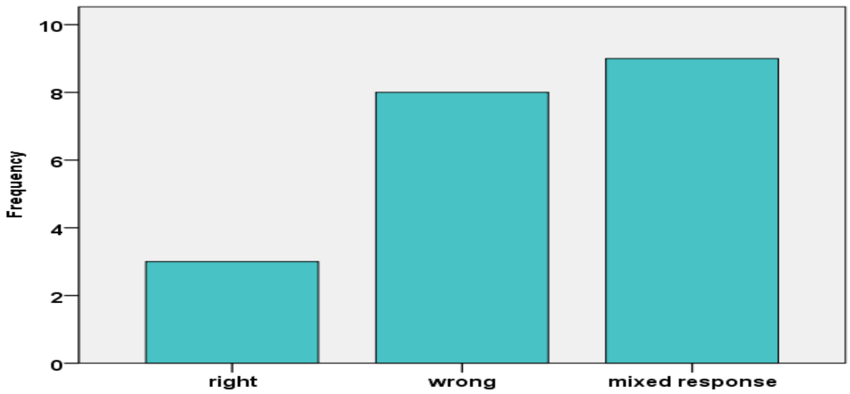

Figure 1. Could you define culture?

Question 2. Would you like to know about others' cultures? Why?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	16	80,0	80,0	80,0
	No	2	10,0	10,0	90,0
	NA	2	10,0	10,0	100,0
	Total	20	100,0	100,0	

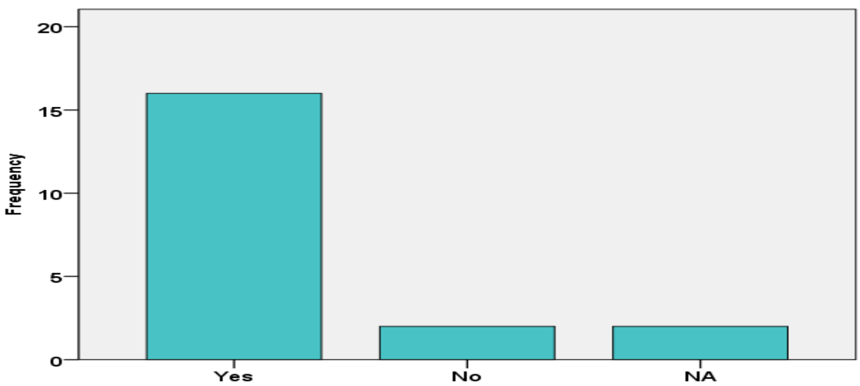

Figure 2. Would you like to know about others' cultures? Why?

Question 7. What is cultural hegemony?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	right	1	5,0	5,0	5,0
	wrong	19	95,0	95,0	100,0
	Total	20	100,0	100,0	

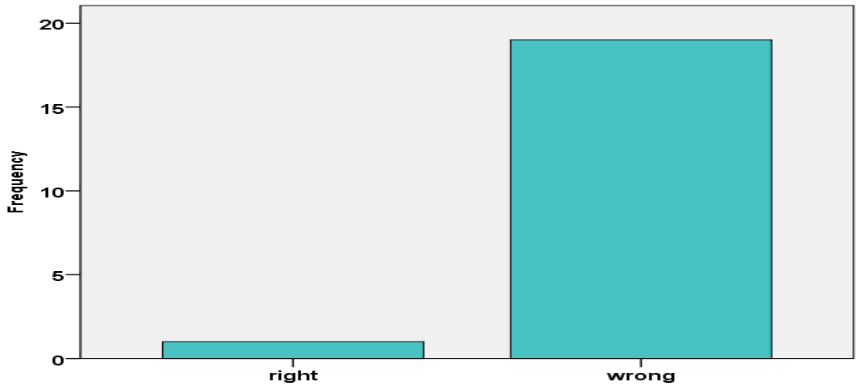

Figure 7. What is cultural hegemony?

In the advanced EFL learners' responses to Question 1, the overall majority of wrong responses is striking; it shows the pell-mell situation of cultural studies, and its academic and scientific ramifications among the students surveyed. It is understandable that "culture" is one of the three most inclusive words in English because it encompasses symbolic and material domains, incorporating the intellectual and the spiritual (including symbolic behavior in a community's everyday life). Yet the term's complexity does not spare EFL learners from the burden of having to fill in their basic knowledge deficit about culture as a structural part of the foreign language they are learning.

As is the case with their peers at Level 4, for Question 2, most of the EFL learners (almost 80%) would like to learn more about foreign cultures. Their enthusiasm for learning about foreign cultures seems to emanate from their conviction that language is part of the culture, and the two are thus are inseparable. Hence, the thesis of this article is supported: There is a timely need for an MCA teaching strategy in a world of cultural turmoil (and unfortunately a debate on the clash of civilizations) where all sides are claiming cultural superiority instead of emphasizing the world's cultural complementarity. Based on the results of the questionnaire, this study asserts that EFL learners need to be given the chance to take cultural studies courses in a mixed curriculum teaching approach that addresses their need to acquire a foreign language, and that satisfies their curiosity about foreign cultures, as demonstrated by the findings of the questionnaire.

Surprisingly, for Question 7, only one individual out of the 20-student sample could define "cultural hegemony" in a satisfactory manner, which is a serious failure on the part of would-be graduates who are supposed to at least be familiar with the term, let alone its definition. As mentioned before, hegemony in cultural studies is one of the most familiar concepts given today's heated global context of different sides claiming cultural superiority versus cultural inferiority.

3. Discussion

This article has revealed a great deal about the extent of the basic knowledge deficit among EFL learners regarding culture studies, but the data paradoxically show how much they are curious about foreign cultures, especially the culture of the foreign language in which they are specializing.

Most data analyses have pointed out the general failure on the part of the students surveyed (concerning all levels) to answer even basic Yes/No questions about culture and culture studies. In response to Question 6, for example, no *single* student from either of the two groups could name a single prominent figure in culture studies. Had these graduates been exposed to basic concepts in cultural studies through an EFL MCA, this paper argues, they would have been able to define key cultural studies ideas and would have thus been able to differentiate between cultural hegemony and cultural complementarity, for example. To avoid cultural stereotyping and racial profiling in cross-cultural interactions, the MCA approach to teaching EFL would be very helpful.

This remarkable deficit can only testify to a major point this study is trying to make: Communicative competence is not a panoply of isolated grammatical, semantic rules of the target language. Rather, it is an inclusive package that should incorporate language as well cultural content, which this work calls the MCA, and which aims to attain what Alptekin calls “intercultural communicative competence” (2002). The MCA's bottom line is a culturally enriched communicative capacity that serves both purposes: mastering a foreign language and producing a culturally aware EFL graduate who can distinguish between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation.

The majority of the students lack general knowledge of what "culture" means in all its aspects. The weak responses to Question 1 may explain the striking results for Question 2, for which is around 85% (L4: 90%; L7/8: 80%) answered “Yes” as to whether they would like to know about other cultures; this reflects EFL learners’ curiosity about foreign cultures. This thirst for more exposure to foreign cultures validates the main thesis of this study, which argues for a timely MCA in curriculum design for EFL learners. This can only account for the fact that if given the chance, EFL learners would perform well in cultural studies, taking the discussion back to the primary thesis of this article, which encourages using the MCA with students of foreign languages.

Moreover, the analysis of the results underscores the paradox between the overall 80% majority (L4: 90%; L7/8: 70%) who believes that language is part of the culture (for Question 3), and also the average majority of around 57% (for Question 4) (L4: 60%; L7/8: 55%), who would prefer to see cultural topics included in their prospective curriculum, as they believe cultural studies is relevant to their future academic plans. Accounting for such a gap shows that EFL learners who have had very little exposure to cultural studies subjects are afraid that including them might induce a further burden in terms of passing their exams and earning high grades to graduate, merely because they are not familiar with taking cultural studies exams. Their concern can be alleviated by dealing with its source through adopting an MCA to dissipate such a familiarity deficit. Cross-disciplinary instruction is now the most efficient teaching and research method, which has been gaining momentum as the debate on the clash of civilizations returns to the arena of academic (and even popular) circles.

Finally, the results have demonstrated that this is a time of global cultural interconnectivity, which EFL curricula should reflect. Skill-focused curricula no longer fit the needs of today’s EFL learners, who are exposed to all facets of foreign cultural manifestations outside their universities’ context. Yet at the same time, they are confined to a curriculum composed of basic language skills and a variety of linguistics subjects (both theoretical and applied). This study has also shown that prospective curriculum designers should take profound world changes into account by expanding the prospects for EFL learners to diversify their learning resources and be prepared to become real “functional members” of their respective societies.

4. Conclusion

Contrary to the perspective that EFL learners need to only acquire language skills (in addition to some linguistics and semantics subjects), the findings of this study emphasize the opposite stance: that EFL curricula need to be updated and become more inclusive. The results reveal a paradox that curriculum designers in EFL instruction need to address. On the one hand, the questionnaire's outcomes show a clear knowledge deficit regarding cultural studies, such that most of the students could not define basic terms (e.g., "culture") and could not name a figure in the field of cultural studies. On the other hand, the students have a deep interest and intellectual curiosity in terms of wanting to know more about foreign cultures (in this case, English).

EFL curricula should build upon the intellectual interest of EFL students in learning about other cultures by adopting the MCA strategy in teaching EFL. The MCA would engage them by addressing their interest in foreign cultures at a time when the world is witnessing a resurrection of the universal debate about the purported clash of cultures. Moreover, the MCA would help EFL learners not only learn English through culture but also develop their views on a litany of cultural issues related to their society or foreign cultures; that is what "functional members of society" do, in Offorma's words.

Although this study employed a verifiable ethnographic method—a questionnaire that was peer-reviewed by elites with academic authority in their fields of expertise—the author had to limit the sample to a single university. Other constraints included the author's inability to make the study as exhaustive and extensive as it should be. This is due to COVID-19 restrictions, which have impacted all aspects of life, including the students' willingness to respond to the variety of sets of questions on time. Furthermore, the study could not cover all relevant issues related to EFL teaching methods, nor curriculum design complexities. Curriculum design is an independent area and cannot be sufficiently discussed in this article, whose sole focus is the validity of the MCA teaching strategy in the novel context of rapid global change.

5. Declaration of Interest

The authors wish to declare that they are not aware of any facts that may be considered as potential conflicts of interest, and there has been no financial support for this work that could have influenced its outcome. We do confirm that there are no known conflicts of interest associated with this publication.

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Appendices

Appendix I:

Questionnaire

The Relevance of the Mixed Curriculum Approach (MCA) to Learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL):

The English Department, Majmaah University, as a Case Study

1- Would you like to know about others’ Cultures?
2- Do you think that Language is part of Culture?
3- As a Foreign Language Learner, would you like Cultural Studies to be included in your Curriculum? Why?

4- Choose one of your favorite subjects from the list below:
   - Social identity/social groups in the United States
   - American immigration history

- The 1950s and the baby boomers
- American social geography
- Britain's modern culture
- Cinema and Music
- British life and culture
- American society: a Melting pot OR a piece of mosaic?
- Ethnicity and cultural tolerance in Britain

5- Can you name one of the influential figures in the field of Cultural Studies?

6- What is Cultural Hegemony?

Appendix II:

Samples of Students' hard-copy responses

Level4:

1- Could you define Culture?

1.pdf 5.pdf 17.pdf

Level 7:

7.pdf 9.pdf 19.pdf

Level 8:

11.pdf 13.pdf 15.pdf

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Thai and non-Thai English language teachers’ beliefs and practices of teaching English to low-proficiency Chinese tertiary students in Thailand

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Abstract

Code-switching or using a native language (L1) is commonly employed in an EFL classroom to facilitate comprehension to low-proficiency learners. However, in a context where teachers and learners do not share the same mother tongue, it causes some challenges to language teachers. As teachers’ beliefs directly influence their practices, and research on teachers’ beliefs in teaching low proficiency learners has been limited, this study aims to investigate teachers’ beliefs and practices relating to this regard to better understand the phenomena. A qualitative approach was adopted for the study. Five teachers of English at a university in southern Thailand participated in the study. Their beliefs were investigated through semi-structured interviews, and their practices were observed throughout the first half of the semester to explore how they taught or how to tackle the language barriers. The results reveal that teachers’ beliefs and practices were interwoven. Most teacher participants viewed low-proficiency learners as those who had low motivation and lacked language competence to produce the target language. The major challenges were related to students’ low motivation and low proficiency which caused difficulties in communication and instruction. With reference to their practices, this study indicates that L1 still played an important role even when teachers and students could not communicate through their native language. Other practices were frequently observed included simplification, restatement, asking students to spell out the words, and visualization. The results of the study, therefore, provide insights into teachers’ beliefs and guide teachers’ practices relating to these instructional phenomena.

Keywords: Low-proficiency learners; code-switching; first language (L1); teachers’ beliefs, teachers’ practices

1. Introduction

Code-switching or using a native language (first language: L1) has long been debatable in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Even though L1 could provide advantages and disadvantages to language learners in English classes, it is generally accepted that L1 is used as a means to facilitate comprehension, especially for beginners or low proficiency learners (de la Fuente & Goldenberg, 2020). However, in a context where teachers and learners do not share the same mother tongue and where English is a mandatory means of instructions and communication, it is impossible to do so.

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Consequently, it inevitably poses some challenges for language teachers who are assigned to teach such low proficiency mixed-L1 learners.

The English language plays a significant role as it has been increasingly used as a medium of instruction in higher education. Statistically, in 2011 there were over 4.3 million foreign tertiary students worldwide, enrolling outside their home country (OECD, 2013). Among international students, Chinese students are one of the majority groups of international students in several nations including Thailand, making 46.4% of total foreign students (Office of Higher Education of Thailand, 2010 in Yin, et al., 2015). Therefore, the growing number of Chinese students necessitates language teachers conducting classes and interacting with low proficiency students, enrolled in any given English-medium instruction degree programs.

According to Kubanyiova & Feryok (2015), beliefs play a significant role in teachers' decision making and pedagogical practices. Borg (2001, p. 186) defines belief as "a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is, therefore, imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behavior." As beliefs influence how teachers interpret, apply, and implement pedagogical approaches (Dos Santos, 2018), understanding teachers' beliefs can help gain insights into teachers' decisions and practices. Most importantly, beliefs are directly related to success or failure in the teaching and learning process (Campbell et al., 2014). Thus, understanding what beliefs teachers hold can result in their instructional improvement which is deemed important as they are key persons who teach English to language learners.

Research on teachers' beliefs and practices has investigated general and domain-specific areas. The explorations deal with language learner autonomy (e.g. Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2019), reading instruction (e.g. Anders & Evans, 2019; Brannan, et al., 2020), writing instruction (e.g., Yu et al., 2020), listening instruction (e.g. Sah & Shah, 2020) speaking instruction (Farrell & Yang, 2019), grammar instruction (e.g. Al-Qutaiti, & Ahmad, 2018; Sato & Oyanedel, 2019), vocabulary instruction (e.g. Bancha, 2019), and pronunciation instruction (e.g. Nguyen & Newton, 2020). However, studies focusing on teachers' beliefs relating to teaching English to low-proficiency learners have been limited. This study, therefore, aims to explore teachers' beliefs and practices in this particular area.

More specifically, this study investigated Thai and non-Thai English language teachers' beliefs and practices in teaching English to low-proficiency Chinese students with whom they did not share the same native language. As beliefs influence teachers' practices, examining the beliefs teachers hold would allow language teachers to improve their instructional practice and to promote professional learning (de Vries et al., 2014). This research hopes to provide insights into what beliefs teachers have constructed in teaching low-proficiency learners, which have been underexplored. Further, the results would be a springboard for teachers and curriculum designers to gain insights into what takes place in actual classes where some communication barriers between teachers and students are most likely to occur.

1.1. Literature review

1.1.1. Language Teachers' Beliefs

In research related to education, the intellective element of teaching has been recognized as primary in successful teaching (Moini, 2009). Pursuing the significance of research in general education, the teaching of language is now being viewed as a complicated intellectual process (Borg, 2003) because it is a procedure 'which is defined by dynamic interactions among cognition, context and experience' (Borg, 2015, p. 275). Unquestionably, in the intellective pattern, the inner thought procedure found in educators, as well as their outward demeanor, is significant to understand teaching.

A study on teacher's beliefs has investigated what language teachers know and how they think, believe, and act (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015). Other research discovers that teachers possess beliefs of their language learning and teaching, and these beliefs shape their teaching ideas and techniques implemented in classrooms (Dos Santos, 2018; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017). As these beliefs affect their goals, procedures, materials, classroom interaction patterns, and roles (Borg, 2015), investigating teachers' beliefs is essential because recognizing how beliefs have been constructed facilitates a better understanding and improvement of teachers' practices.

Additionally, several studies similarly shared three main sources of teachers' beliefs which greatly influence their practices. Teachers' own learning or schooling experience is the first source of belief construction. Beliefs are constructed through teachers' experience as a learner (Bancha, 2019). According to Lortie (2002), the term apprenticeship of observation is coined in reference to the observation of teaching as language learners. The learning experience teachers have undergone when they were students has formed their instructional practices. The second source of teachers' beliefs is the teacher education program (Sanchez & Borg, 2014). What the teachers learn from their professional education constructs their pedagogical knowledge of the subject matter, teaching methods, student learning, and the role of teachers, all of which contribute to their teaching. Teachers decide and plan their instructions based on their theoretical beliefs about teaching and learning (Borg, 2015). Third, teachers' direct teaching experience is another source of teachers' knowledge (Bancha, 2019; Dos Santos, 2018). Their teaching experience influences and eventually shapes their classroom practices.

The purpose of this study is, therefore, to examine teachers' beliefs, used as the theoretical framework to understand what beliefs teachers hold in teaching low proficiency learners.

1.1.2. Related Studies Relating to Practices of Teaching English to Low Proficiency Learners

Scholars such as Holt and Gaer (1993 in Holt, 1995) suggest techniques of teaching low-level adult ESL (English as a Second Language) learners who share similar characteristics of beginning-level learners. Their suggestions include activating their schemata through building on their experiences, using learners as resources, sequencing the activities from less to more challenging, using cooperative learning between more capable and less capable peers, employing a variety of teaching techniques to serve different learning styles, and utilizing varied teaching materials, such as realia, flashcards, games, and pictures. As proposed by the researchers, a variety of teaching repertoires and strategies should be implemented with these learners.

Numerous researches into low-proficiency learners have investigated learning strategies (such as Derakhshan, & Shakki, 2018; Fukuda, 2018; Javed & Ali, 2018), learners' beliefs (Huang & Tsai, 2003), interaction behaviors (Miura, 2021), implementation of peer collaborative learning to improve language skills (Huang et al., 2017; Niu, et al., 2018) and effects of different tasks (Dao & McDonough, 2017). It is clear that the aforementioned studies focus mainly on learners rather than teachers.

In other research on pedagogical practices of low proficiency learners, some teaching repertoires and strategies were examined. It shows that L1 or code-switching has been incorporated to foster understanding to low-proficiency learners. For instance, Kambe (2016) implemented L2-L1 interactional strategy and L1-L2 vocabulary activities to foster a meaning negotiation strategy with low-proficiency Japanese university students to enable them to discuss in English. Firkins et al. (2007) used group work and code-switching to scaffold low-proficiency students to write procedural texts.

Apart from code-switching, other direct teaching methods were employed. To illustrate, Mekala & Ponmani (2017) provided direct written corrective feedback to enhance low proficiency university students' writing skills. Kobayashi (2018) used metacognitive instruction (listening tasks to mediate listening processes and self-concept) for successful communication. Lam (2010) taught oral communication to low proficiency secondary school students in Hong Kong to help them to communicate in ESL oral classrooms. Similarly, Sato et al. (2019) introduced communication strategies to low proficiency Japanese university students to enable them to successfully achieve language tasks. These studies evidently show that teachers seemed to prioritize strategies to facilitate communication. Furthermore, it is worth noting that they were conducted in the context of homogenous learners by nationality in that L1 plays an important role in fostering understanding of the lessons provided to low proficiency learners. In addition, communication strategies as priorities were emphasized to foster effective communication.

While the above-mentioned research focuses mainly on the homogenous classrooms by nationality, the following studies deal with the practices that teachers implemented in a heterogeneous class with multicultural low proficiency students. An investigation by Cohen (1991) shows some successful techniques of teaching language to classes, mixed with majority students, whose L1 is English and minority students with different mother tongues in the US. Her work revealed that opportunities of working and talking among peers allowed learners to understand the lessons better and improve their English language. Concurrently, Glenton (2004) found that peer learning could reduce the problems of languages in a mixed nationality class as students were more confident talking to peers than to teachers. The underlying theory underpinning this concept is scaffolding or peer cooperative learning which students used each other or more capable students as resources for learning (Vygotsky, 1978 in Smagorinsky, 2018).

Another example by Ismaili (2015) investigated non-native English-speaking teachers and Macedonian students' satisfaction of L1, employed in English classes at a university in multilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural settings in Macedonia. Her findings indicated that in a diverse setting, L1 still played a significant role in actual classes. One of the reasons was that amongst these two teacher participants, one of them was Albanian who could speak all three languages of the Macedonian official language, Albanian ethnic language, and English, which made it possible for her to use all the students' L1. As shown earlier, code-switching and peer cooperative learning were found prominently used by teachers.

This explanatory study has reviewed teaching techniques and strategies, which earlier research has found, in order to gain more understanding of what has not been previously discovered (Burns & Grove, 2010).

1.2. Research questions

What are teachers' beliefs relating to teaching English to low-proficiency Chinese students?

What are teachers' practices relating to teaching English to low-proficiency Chinese students?

2. Method

An exploratory qualitative approach was adopted to collect data from teacher participants and to understand the phenomena.

2.1. Participants

Purposive sampling was used to select the samples in this study. Participants were two Thai and three English native university teachers, assigned to teach different English courses (as shown in Table 1) to Chinese students at the time of the data collection. A consent letter was sent to the teacher participants to ask for cooperation to participate in the interviews and to ask for permission to observe their classes. The teachers have agreed to volunteer to participate in the semi-structured interviews and allowed classroom observations of their classes.

Seventy-one Chinese students have agreed to participate in the study. According to Prince of Songkla University's English language proficiency requirement, they were classified as low-proficiency students. Verbal consent was also needed to ask for students' permission to observe their learning behaviors in class. A pseudonym was applied to protect their identity as outlined in ethical codes (Saunders et al., 2015). None of these teachers understood the Chinese language. Their profile, describing courses observed, educational background, the length of teaching experience, and their nationality was presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Teachers' Profile

Teacher	Courses Observed	Educational Background	Teaching Experience	Teachers' Nationality
T1	English for International Program I	B.A. (Business Administration)	8 years	American
T2	English for Job Application	PhD. (English as an International Program)	10 years	Thai
T3	English for Effective Communication	M.A. (Education)	7 years	Australian
T4	English for Business	M.A. (Teaching English as a Foreign Language)	16 years	Thai
T5	English for International Program II	Ed. D. (Teaching Methodology and Culture Awareness)	16 years	British

2.2. Instruments and data collection procedures

Two main data gathering tools were semi-structured interviews and class observation. A semi-structured interview was used to provide answers concerning teachers' beliefs. In order to validate this research tool, the interview questions were checked for grammatical accuracy by an English native teacher and content validity was also examined by two Thai teachers of English. It was then tried out with a teacher who did not participate in the study. After the interview questions were revised, they were used after the last session of the classroom observation to assure that all the teacher participants have had experience teaching low-proficiency students or have previously taught these Chinese students. The interview was conducted in English with individual teachers at their convenience.

Classroom observations could help clarity another research question in relation to the teachers' practices. In this project, teaching techniques or strategies all teacher participants used to teach or deal with their low-proficiency Chinese students and students' responses were thoroughly observed, noted, and recorded for seven to eight weeks throughout the first half of the first semester 2020/2021, and two video cameras (both at the front and back of the classrooms) were used to record the observed classes. In total, their 35 3-hour classes were recorded.

2.3 Data analysis

Data gathered from the semi-structured interviews about teachers' beliefs and practices were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To confirm the reliability of themes, two lecturers of English with an academic title of Assistant Professor and a degree in Applied Linguistics were asked to read the transcriptions of the interviews and to approve the themes. Classroom observations were also transcribed and analyzed using discourse analysis (Li & Walsh, 2011). Not all but only selected observation data were interpreted according to contexts and purposes (Weatherall et al., 2010) of examining how teachers interacted with individual students, especially when the former taught or conducted their class activities.

3. Results

3.1. Beliefs Relating to Teaching English to Low Proficiency Students

In response to the first research question, the semi-structured interview was the main source to address teachers' beliefs on teaching English to low-proficiency Chinese students. The findings were based on three themes, generated from the interview data: characteristics of low proficiency students, instructional challenges, and teaching techniques suitable for low proficiency students. The detailed discovery of these three concepts is reported as follows:

3.1.1.Characteristics of Low Proficiency Students

The interview data show that all teacher participants held similar beliefs concerning characteristics of low proficiency students. When asked, "What does a low-proficiency learner mean in your opinion?", two teachers (T1 and T2) viewed low proficiency as insufficient competence of English in both receptive and productive skills. To elaborate on this, according to T2,

> *"As a teacher, you would know that when you speak, you know that students do not understand you. I always ask questions both to the whole class and individuals. … those (low proficiency) students would struggle, or sometimes they turned to their friends and asked what the teacher said."*

While T1 and T2 focused more on the overall competence level, T3 and T4 paid more attention to students' productive skills. In T3's words,

> *"Low proficiency means that they can't. It is more on production. If they can't produce the language, it is low proficiency. … it is more of what they can do, what they can't."*

T5 viewed low proficiency students as those who were not ready and needed more time for improvement as he mentioned,

> *"It means those who need more help. They need more time. They need more time with reading, speaking and so on. So, they absolutely need more time."*

The above statements show teachers' beliefs of low proficiency students as those who could not understand, could not communicate in English by themselves (in speaking or writing) and needed more scaffolding (help and support) from teachers and peers. Further, they suggest that low-proficiency learners are those who do not have adequate English competence to enable them to communicate successfully in the target language by themselves. These findings are in line with those by Alfian (2018) and Fukada (2019) who found that low-proficiency learners refer to those who are low-achieving, less successful, or unsuccessful language learners. Furthermore, they support Huang & Tsai (2003) whose discovery indicates that low proficiency learners tend to have less positive language learning aptitude than their high-proficiency counterparts.

3.1.2. Challenges of Teaching Low Proficiency Students

When asked if it was difficult to teach this particular group of students, the teacher participants have expressed different opinions in this regard. It was found that learners' low motivation was the first challenge that two teachers (T2 and T4) mentioned. For instance, in T2's words,

> *"They have done this (learning English) for over 12 years. They are still beginners. So, they do not like to learn English. I think the most important thing is that they don't like to learn English."*

A possible explanation might be that the students' participants in the study were Chinese who were familiar with repetitive rote-learning and memorization which was a teaching and learning style, predominantly used in China (Guo et al., 2017; Zhan & Wan, 2016). This style of learning a foreign language demotivates students to learn English (Gong et al., 2020; Zhong, 2015). Consistent with Xiao's (2012) work, this study found that low proficiency learners had low motivation, they found learning English very difficult, and they tended not to be able to complete tasks. In addition, these results confirm those of Fukada (2019) who found that not only did low proficiency learners have low motivation to learn languages but they also had negative attitudes towards any given target language.

In contrast to T2 and T4 whose beliefs relating to learners' motivation of learning a target language, T1 and T5 placed their beliefs on the ability to communicate which made teaching this group of students different from high proficiency students as shown in the following excerpts.

Excerpt 1

> *With competent students, you can just ask them first, but this group, they can't even speak the language. OMG, I even think they could not understand even when I asked them to take quizzes. You know, they don't understand. I was thinking when I was speaking English, I doubt most of them didn't understand my English. (T1)*

The data show that students with poor English proficiency could encounter hardship in learning. As suggested by Excerpt 1, communication was the second instructional challenge. Therefore, it would be fair to argue that these students were passive learners who were familiar with traditional whole-class direct instruction or lecturing style as a result of the teaching culture in several Chinese institutions (Yin et al., 2016), where they were consequently provided with few opportunities to practice listening and speaking English (Zhan & Wan, 2016).

Another challenge was in relation to teachers' willingness to teach. Their mindsets or teaching attitudes influenced their beliefs and practices. According to T1,

Excerpt 2

> *For this group, I have to think and have a mindset to do everything to make them understand. … When I taught this group, I used intonation, body language. I act out to show them when I speak. It sounds silly but when you have students with low proficiency, I tried everything. … For me sometimes, it really discouraged me. …They are nice, but it is the truth that they didn't understand English.*

This particular excerpt reveals that the teacher's disposition of willingness to teach or their mindset guided him as to how to teach (Borg, 2015).

3.1.3. Teaching Techniques Suitable for Low Proficiency Students

The interview data show a wide range of teaching techniques which individual teachers used, regardless of what similar or different beliefs they held. Five main teaching techniques emerged from the data: (1) code-switching, (2) technology, (3) simplification, (4) questioning, and (5) peer/co-operative learning.

Code-switching

The first technique, the code-switching or L1 translation, was reported using by T2 and T3 in their classes with low proficiency students. The reasons to use this practice were shown below.

Excerpt 3

> *I think the suitable strategy with low proficiency students is to use their mother tongue. If you listen to a foreign language for more than 15 minutes. … you feel tired and bored. So, code-switching to their L1 will help them reach or to improve (T2).*

Excerpt 4

> *I think you need to do more group work with their level. Include low proficiency in the group because it must be worst in the class if you were students who didn't know what was going on. You really need to make sure they understand the question. That can be used with L1, get them to translate into L1 back and forth (T3).*

The above accounts demonstrate that teachers' beliefs that information was best mediated through L1. Further, in the circumstances where teachers shared different mother tongues with the students, the provision of L1 translation by Chinese students was considered acceptable in their opinion as they realized that students needed assistance. These findings indicate that teachers believed that code-switching is an effective teaching method, which helps clarify course contents, especially difficult concepts and supports learning of the target language (Gu & Benson, 2015). The results, hence, endorse Grant and Nguyen's (2017) study in which they found that university teachers used code-switching to clarify class instructions and to cover course contents.

Technology

Technology, the second technique, was discussed in the interviews with T2 and T4, who believed that it could mediate learning for low-proficiency students. They both agreed on the use of technology to motivate students as shown in the following excerpts. T2 remarked her reason to incorporate technology with learning that

> *"Students are engaged a lot with technology. Maybe they could feel more comfortable practicing using technology."*

Her remark shows that precedence was given to an affective factor, which could make students feel more relaxing or comfortable when learning English. Another reason to use technology was given by T4 who stated that,

> *"...Kahoot, right? Get them to get correct answers within ten or twenty seconds, right? To motivate them from a boring lesson, right?"*

The above statements evidently demonstrate that T2 and T4 have placed the importance on an affective factor of positive feelings (feeling of fun from games) and motivation that could affect learning a target language (Lasagabaster, 2017) and technology could promote motivation in language learning (Ahmadi & Reza, 2018). The findings are in line with those by Tayan (2017) who found that both university teachers and students in the Middle East recognized that the use of technology facilitates communication and provides learners with greater motivation to learn a target language.

Simplification

Simplification came as the third technique as shown in the interview data with T1. According to the teacher, through verbal and non-verbal communication,

> *"I used sign language, the body language you know, anything I could do at that time. ...With individual students, I tried a few times, but impossible, I tried to simplify again. I tried everything I could to help me communicate with them."*

The interview illustrates that T1's believed that linguistic simplification of vocabulary and language structures, and demonstration enable the students to understand the lessons. As addressed in the reference above, to clarify instruction and scaffold learning, the teachers simplify course contents in order to make it more comprehensible for the learners (Krashen, 2017). This particular discovery is consistent with that of Freeman (2016) and Richards (2017), suggesting that ESL teachers need discourse skills or the ability to maintain communication in English instruction.

Questioning

The fourth technique, found to assist low proficiency students was questioning. T4 further explained how she assured if the students understood what they were learning through questions. As T4 pointed out,

> *"I try to think about the questions. Maybe yes-no questions sometimes, WH-questions because I want to have them think, like focus on questions."*

The data above proposes that questioning was an effective technique that the teacher believed could enhance the students' English comprehension. The findings strongly support a previous study by Fitriati, et al. (2017), showing that teachers questioned to engage students in classroom interaction, and to encourage them to give verbal responses which eventually lead them to understand lessons.

Peer Learning

The sixth and last technique, peer learning, was reported by T5 who discussed the advantages of active learning or peer learning to enhance English for low proficiency students. In his words,

> *"Teachers should use active learning. Lecturing does not work. … Peer learning is the most effective. … Students take care of each other, they understand each other, their difficulties, equality…"*

The interview reveals that the teacher considered that scaffolding in which more capable peers support or guide less capable ones could facilitate learning (Vygotsky, 1978 in Smagorinsky, 2018). These results verify studies by Cohen (1991) and Glenton (2004) who confirm the effectiveness of peer learning or scaffolding in which more capable learners assist less capable peers.

3.2. Practices Relating to Teaching English to Low Proficiency Students

The second research question asks: What are teachers' practices relating to teaching English to low-proficiency Chinese students? The findings were mainly drawn from classroom observations. Discourse Analysis (DA) was the framework that illustrated the observational extracts (Appendix). Data were presented responding to the main theme of how the teachers conducted their classes. More specifically, how the teachers dealt with the communication barriers during classes was examined.

The results presented below were derived from classrooms conducted with groups of Chinese students with a mixed ability. There appeared core six strategies that the teachers reported and implemented in actual classes. The details of those strategies are described as follows:

3.2.1. Code-switching or L1 Translation

The classroom observations evidently suggest that students' L1 (the native language of Chinese) was the strategy that all teachers relied on, even though teachers and students did not share the same L1 and none of the teachers could speak Chinese. However, this strategy was used slightly differently.

Four teachers (T1, T2, T3, and T5) asked high-proficiency students to translate what they explained from English into Chinese. For example, T1 stated that,

> *"I let the others speak (translated into Chinese) for them and then they understand." (Interview).*

As described by T2,

> *"When I explained something to them, I asked one or two students who were very good to translate it into Chinese." (Interview).*

T5 elaborated on his reasons for the use of this practice. In his words,

> *"L1 is a part of language learning. When students' proficiency is very low, it might help."*

The descriptions above indicate that teachers' beliefs in the advantages of L1 influence their practices (Borg, 2015).

Unlike the other four teachers, T4 did not intentionally ask her students to translate. However, as observed, high-proficiency students would translate what the teacher said into Chinese to help their classmates. The dialogue below illustrates a situation that took place in her class.

Excerpt 5

Situation: The teacher asked individual students why they did not complete the quiz she assigned.

Line Number	Speaker	
1	T1	((The teacher approached a student.)) You did not do the quiz. (0.3)
2	S1	((Silence))
3	T1	Why don't you do the quiz? (0.5)
4	S1	((Silence))
5	S2	((He spoke in Chinese.))
6	S1	Sorry.

As shown above, T4 tried to ask the students about the quiz assignment. After two attempts (lines 1 and 4), one classmate translated what she said into Chinese (line 5). In this case, even though T4 did not explicitly ask any high proficiency students to help translate the question, L1 was inevitably used (Chinese) to enable the class to move further. It could be argued that code-switching was a clear and simple way that could ease the interactions between teachers and students.

Therefore, it would be fair to claim that L1 was a possible option the teachers could use to enable students to understand their intended messages and achieve the objectives of the lessons. Consistent with previous studies (e.g., David et al., 2015; Firkins et al., 2007; Kambe, 2016), these findings confirmed that L1 was effective as a means to foster comprehension to low proficiency students, even in the circumstances where the teachers did not share the same mother tongue with the students.

3.2.2. Restatement

The next example was related to how better English competent students helped their peers to communicate with teachers in English. Interestingly, such incidents occurred in all teachers' classes.

Excerpt 6

Situation: The teacher asked students to take turns to give a presentation.

Line Number	Speaker	
1	S1	((A student raised his hand.)) I want to present.
2	T3	((Look at the student)). Sorry↑. Say that again ↑.
3	S1	((A student raised his hand.)) I want to present.
4	T3	((Move closer)). What?
5	S2	He wants to be the second one. He wants to present.

The extract above demonstrates that the teacher was trying to understand the student's message (line 2). However, after a few attempts, a high-proficiency student would automatically help by repeating what his classmate said (line 5). This instance suggests that poorly-pronounced words caused difficulties and obstructed the class to move forward. Therefore, it could be argued that the unfamiliarity of pronunciation by teachers and students was one of the barriers in teaching and learning (Maniam & Vaithinathan, 2018; Presadă & Badea, 2018). Hence, these results support Darcy's (2018) study, indicating the role of clear pronunciation which improves comprehension and helps minimize effort for interlocutors.

3.2.3. Spelling

Spelling was found to be useful when pronunciation became an issue. In other words, teachers asked the students to spell the word aloud. This strategy was detected in several classes, especially in T4's. One instance was presented in Excerpt 7 below.

Excerpt 7

Situation: T4 was giving the whole class an assignment. She then asked individual students to name their interested country.

Line Number	Speaker	
1	T4	((The teacher approached a student.)) Choose a country you wish to do the business with. Give me a name of the country. (0.3)
2	S1	France ((His pronunciation was not clear.))
3	T4	((Shake her head)). (0.3) Sorry.
4	S1	France ((His pronunciation was still not clear, but he spoke louder.))
5	T4	((Shake her head)). (0.5) Can you spell that?
6	S1	F-R-A-N-C-E
7	T4	(Write it down on the board) Next, please.

This dialogue illustrates that S1 correctly understood the teachers' instruction as he was able to respond to her question (lines 2 and 4). Interestingly, it was also observed that high proficiency students did not help repeat what his friend said. Instead, S1 tried to interact with the teacher again by himself (lines 2 and 4). As clearly shown, when it became difficult for the teacher to understand the student, asking the learner to spell out the word could solve communicative obstacles. Consistently, this finding supports the work of Ranbom & Connine's (2011) who discovered that linking pronunciation with spelling or knowing spelling-sound correspondences helps interlocutors familiarize themselves and recognize words.

3.2.4. Visualization: Drawing

Other class observations show that T1 and T3 used visualizing techniques to facilitate comprehension and to draw students' attention. T3 reported the use of pictures in his class as below,

"I often use Google to do searching of pictures" (Interview, T3).

It was also found that that picture eases the comprehension between teachers and students as illustrated in Excerpt 8 below.

Excerpt 8

Situation: T1 began his class by talking about different cities around the world as a means to get students prepared before he moved on to the next part.

Line Number	Speaker	
1	T1	((The teacher approached a student.)) Is your hometown near the coast? ((0.3)
2	S1	((Silence)) ((The student uses her mobile phone to look up for the word.))
3	T1	((Draw a line while speaking)) This is a land. The blue part is the sea. Is your hometown near the sea(0.3)
4	S1	Yes. How write? ((Gesture of writing))
5	T1	((Write the word on the board)).
6	S1	((Look up in a dictionary))

With students' limited communicative competence, the teacher drew pictures to explain the meaning of coast. Then, the student would like to assure the meaning of the target word, so she asked the teacher to write down the word on the whiteboard, and then searched for the meaning again. This incident demonstrates that the drawing technique facilitates the understanding of the meaning of the target word, corroborating the study of Adoniou (2013) who used drawing with his primary school students in English medium writing classes to help them understand vocabulary.

3.2.5. Visualization: Board

Similar to the Excerpt above, writing messages was found to be another technique, applied by four teachers (T1, T2, T3, and T4). The observations show that the whiteboard was used a great deal in any one class. Additionally, it was used mainly to write down target words and related messages, not only when students requested but also when teachers noticed that students did not understand what the teachers meant. Excerpt 9 below illustrates how T4 introduced a target word.

Excerpt 9

Situation: The teacher talked about a business plan.

Line Number	Speaker	
1	T4	((The teacher asked the whole class.)) Do you know this word, invest?
2	S1	Can you write it down?
3	T4	Sure. ((The word was written down on the whiteboard.))
4	S2	Invest.
5	T4	Right, invest. What does it mean?
6	S3	You want to build something, you invest.
7	T4	When you invest, you want to build a house. So, what is it?

In this observation, the teacher wanted to assure if the students knew the meaning of the target word ('Do you know this word, invest?' in line 1), and then the students asked her to write down the word on the board (line 2). The dialogue obviously shows that knowing spelling eases understanding between the interlocutors and to know vocabulary is essential (Webb & Nation, 2017).

In addition to noting vocabulary down on the whiteboard, teachers used written messages to communicate with the students. Writing down the messages on the board and posting them on Learning Management System 2 (LMS2), board and power point slides were frequently seen in their classes.

3.2.6. Elaboration, Simplification, and Comprehension Check

In the following Excerpt, three sub-communicative strategies were observed: elaboration (line 5), simplification (line 9), and comprehension check (line 7) which T4 used to assure that students understand the intended message.

Excerpt 10

Situation: The teacher talked about different cities around the world.

Line Number	Speaker	
1	T4	((The teacher asked the whole class.)) I want you to find out their culture. What is culture? (0.3)
2	SS	((Silence))
3	T4	What is culture? (0.3)
4	S1	No
5	T4	((Point at the slide)). For example, on the book, they eat together after business meeting. Say three main things about culture. OK? Three different culture you have to know if you want to do business with people in that country. For example, people take a nap. You can't meet them after lunch. Don't forget to give me the references. For example, if you take it from the website, give me URL. Next week you need to give information on PPT and share with your friends. Maybe just one minute. If you have photos. For example, Canada, you can show the landmark to let your friends know. Start from where it is and then start the topic. OK?
6	SS	((Silence))
7	T4	What do you have to do?
8	SS	((Silence))
9	T4	Let me review to you. First you need to find a landmark of the country. Second, find good time to do business with people and office hours.
10	S2	Hour?
11	T4	So what is your assignment?
12	SS	((Silence))
13	T4	((Write short instructions of the assignment on the whiteboard))

The extract above shows a long description (line 5), in which the teacher was assigning her students to prepare a presentation. Elaboration was the first strategy the teacher used to interact with her students. After the teacher asked a question to check if the students understood the key concept ('What is culture?' in line 1), she then explained by giving situations or contexts to guide the meaning of culture ('For example, people take a nap. You can't meet them after lunch.' in line 5). This incident indicates that to enable her students to understand the messages that she was trying to convey, the teacher initially explained the meaning of the target word. This observation suggests that teacher believed in the importance of a lexical feature or vocabulary as a basis of communication. It is, therefore, essential to clarify the meaning of the key term to help students' comprehension.

Nevertheless, the elaboration strategy could not help the students completely understand what the teacher was trying to express, as seen from students' reactions in line 6. Their silence obviously indicates that they still could not follow the instructions. The teacher then employed the second strategy of questioning to check their understanding (line7). As shown in line 8, when none of the students responded, the teacher then used simplification or short sentences and simpler structures to explain to them (line 9). She once again checked for their understanding by asking another question in a different way (line 11). After a few efforts were made, the teacher eventually wrote what she meant to convey on the whiteboard. The findings not only show that the teacher tried different communicative strategies in order to interact with her students in the target language but they also confirm that vocabulary was found to be crucial. After the main concept was clarified, the language simplification was then applied.

It could be argued that the teacher's decision to use different techniques took place after she has learned what techniques could enable her students to better understand her messages. As the teacher was aware of her students' limited English competence, she finally changed from verbal to written instructions. Consistent with the results of the study by Ghorbanian and Jabbarpoor (2017), this exploratory research revealed the positive roles of simplification and elaboration on language learning. However, it also discovered that the teacher eventually used written texts as the final possible solution to their intended messages. Therefore, the results of this investigation synchronized with Prabhu's (1990), confirming that teachers decided what teaching methods should be implemented based on their sense of plausibility of what best suited their learners.

4. Conclusions

The core findings of this study reveal that teachers hold different beliefs regarding teaching English to low-proficiency Chinese students, which results in the use of varied instructional practices. More importantly, their practices reflect their beliefs. To scaffold low-proficiency learners, code-switching is considered effective even in a class where interlocutors share different native languages. According to class observations, students' L1 was frequently used to scaffold less capable Chinese students, and to enable the class to proceed. Along with the use of L1 to facilitate teaching and comprehension, other techniques included peer/co-operative learning, visualization, simplification, elaboration, and questioning have been applied.

The results of this research contribute to expanding the body of research revealing how teachers' beliefs influence their practices of teaching English to low-proficiency students. The data gathered, however, might not be sufficient for making conclusive remarks about the complex process of beliefs and practices of teaching English to low-proficiency students in higher education. They, nonetheless, provide a context within which further research can be compared. This study has put an emphasis exclusively on Chinese students and has investigated teachers' beliefs and practices for merely one semester of the academic year 2020/2021. Subsequently, a longitudinal study is recommended to gain more insights into the phenomena.

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Appendix A. Transcription convention of discourse analysis

T:	- teacher
S1: S2: etc,	- identified student
SS:	- several learners at once or the whole class
/ok/ok/ok/	- overlapping or simultaneous utterances by more than one learner
[do you understand?]	
[I see]	- overlap between teacher and learner
=	- turn latching: one turn follows another without any pause
...	- pause of one second or less marked by three periods
(4.0/0.4)	- silence; length given in seconds or micro-seconds
?	- rising intonation – question or other
WHAT	- emphatic speech
((xxx))	- a stretch of unintelligible speech with the length given in seconds
((T gestures the students to start))	- researcher's comments
°said quietly°	- soft speech, said more quietly than usual
↑↓	- rising or falling intonation
C-U-S-T-O-M-E-R	- spelling
(.)	- a micro-pause
::	- lengthening of syllable

(Adopted and adapted from Walsh, 2011)

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Politics and foreign language learning: A study of Saudis' motivations to learn English following the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030

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Abstract

This study examined Saudis' motivation to learn English after the announcement of the Saudi Vision 2030, a strategic social and economic development plan. The study participants included 175 male and female Saudi citizens aged 18–55 years old. Participants answered a Likert-style survey consisting of 27 statements. Their answers were analyzed using ANOVA and t-tests. The findings suggest that Saudis were more motivated to learn English after the announcement. This implies that countries' policies and political decisions can impact their citizens' motivations to learn foreign language. The findings also revealed that younger participants and female participants were more motivated to learn English than their older or male counterparts. The results also show that study participants were most interested in developing their vocabulary and least interested in developing their grammatical skills. This study is the first to investigate how political decisions affect the motives of citizens to learn a foreign language. It is of benefit to linguists, language teachers, language institutes and the business of teaching a foreign language.

Keywords: linguistics; language acquisition; language learning motivation; EFL; Saudi

1. Introduction

The details of Saudi Vision 2030 – Saudi Arabia's strategic plan to reduce its dependency on oil, diversify its economy, and develop its public services by the year 2030 – were announced on April 25, 2016. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman cited the development of Saudi citizens as central to the vision, saying "Our real wealth lies in the ambition of our people and the potential of our younger generation" (Vision 2030, 2021). Saudi Vision 2030 has three pillars: (1) a vibrant society of citizens with strong values living fulfilled lives; (2) a thriving and diverse economy which offers its citizens rewarding opportunities, is globally attractive and competitive, and leverages Saudi Arabia's unique position; and (3) a sense of national ambition (Saudi Vision 2030, 2021). This global-facing policy aims to change Saudi society rather dramatically. This study examines its effects on one aspect of Saudi society – namely, Saudis' motivation to learn English as a foreign language (EFL).

There is some precedent for studying foreign language learning in the context of countries enacting social and economic reforms of the kind described above. Lee (2012) and Melitz (2008) suggested that

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better foreign language abilities translate to more job opportunities. Nunan (2013) suggested that some laborers work hard to improve their language skills in order to improve their income and earning potential. Indeed, Alzahrani (2017, p. 2) states that "At this micro level, the importance of language as a skill goes little beyond the laborers' interest. However, this trend should encourage companies to consider language and how it can help them compete. Moreover, at a macro level, during government-led economic revolutions, language is important to ensure a strong position in the world economy". Some studies have shown that various fields (including education, science, technology, and business) require high English proficiency to be successful or gain entry, and that this has made Chinese workers highly motivated to learn English (Liu, 2007). Indeed, English is more or less the language of globalization and thus plays an important role in career advancement and people's ability to secure professional opportunities (Habbash, 2012). Saudis' EFL learning has been identified as "integral to the 2030 Vision's aim of making Saudi Arabia a regional hub where workers from three major continents can congregate in pursuit of mutually beneficial economic opportunities" (Bunaiyan, 2019, p. 19).

Therefore, this paper studies the relationship between the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030 and Saudis' EFL learning motivations. It introduces concepts such as extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and investigates Saudis' motivations to learn English through this lens. It also examines differences in Saudis' motivation according to their age and gender and highlights which language skills Saudis focus on with Saudi Vision 2030 in mind. This will contribute to the body of literature as it investigates the relation between the foreign language learning motivation and its relation to political decisions.

1.1. Literature review

This section provides an overview of Saudi Vision 2030, its link to language learning (specifically) English language learning, and the literature on language learning motivation.

Saudi Vision 2030

As mentioned above, Saudi Vision 2030 is Saudi Arabia's strategic economic and social development plan. It was unveiled in 2016 by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Saudi Vision 2030 aims to transform Saudi Arabia's economy by making it less dependent on oil and reinvesting in Saudi society to improve Saudis' quality of life (Pavan, 2017). Mohammed bin Salman has sought to transform the Saudi economy for years, and has voiced his skepticism about the country's oil dependence which dates back to its founding in 1932 (Yusuf and Attasi, 2016). The Saudi Vision 2030 document has been hailed as the most influential document in Saudi Arabia's recent history (Mohammad and Alshahrani, 2019).

Saudi 2030 Vision and English language learning

The three pillars of the vision mentioned in the introduction clearly emphasize the need to make the Saudi economy and Saudi society globally competitive through education (Pavan, 2017). Previous studies have established a clear relationship between economic opportunities available to Saudis and Saudis' English language proficiency (Alrashidi and Phan, 2015; Habbash, 2011). This is because English is "one of the key factors in the success and continuity of international economic relations." (Al-Zahrani and Rajab, 2017, p. 88). Indeed, English is a *lingua franca* of globalization, not only because its wide use facilitates effective diplomacy between countries but because English is the main language of information technology, digital learning, artificial intelligence, and scientific research (Al Mukhallafi, 2019, pp. 209–210).

English learning is at the fore of Saudi Vision 2030 because Saudis have, historically, had a relatively low level of English proficiency. Altwaijri (1982, p. 6) stated that “Saudi students study English for nearly ten years, yet their overall performance level in English is low.” Some studies (e.g., Alrashidi and Phan, 2015; Elyas and Picard, 2011; Habbash, 2011) emphasize that this low English language proficiency has a negative impact on the Saudi economy and makes it difficult for Saudi workers to enter or thrive within an increasingly globalized workforce. Despite the severity of the situation, Saudi students are only beginning to learn English in the 1st grade of primary school beginning in the academic year 2021/2022 as the minister of education announced on the 20th of September 2020 in an interview on al-Ekhbariyah TV channel.

Motivation

Motivation can be broadly understood as “an internal drive that makes an individual does the best [they] can to satisfy [their] learning desires” (Daif-Allah and Aljumah, 2020, p. 66). In the context of this study, motivation refers to a person’s attitude, effort, and desire to learn a language (Gardner, 2007). Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) stated that motivation plays a significant role in foreign language learning (FLL). Motivation can determine whether FLL efforts are successful (Alrabai, 2016) and can enhance the quality of students’ FLL efforts (Rahman, 2005; Zulfikar et al., 2019). Indeed, motivation impacts language learners’ self-confidence, intelligence, aptitude, choice of effective learning strategies, and more (Moskovsky et al., 2013). Dörnyei (2010, p. 74) suggested that “learners with sufficient motivation can achieve a working knowledge of an L2, regardless of their language aptitude, whereas without sufficient motivation even the brightest learners are unlikely to persist long enough to attain any really useful language.” This sentiment is echoed in other studies by Lier (1996, p. 98) and Moskovsky et al. (2013, p. 35).

How then should we understand motivation? Brophy (1987) suggested that modeling, direct instructions, communication of expectations, and socializing can motivate learning. Hamachek (1989) suggested that motivation plays important psychological functions – it energizes, directs that energy, and helps people achieve their goals by helping them choose goal-attainment-appropriate behavior. Dornyei’s (1998a, 1998b) taxonomy of motivation consists of three different levels: language, learner, and situative motivation. The first is founded on traditional concepts of both instrumental, which is to learn for a reason e.g., a job, promotion, grades etc., and interrogative motivation which refers to learning in order to be part of the community of the target language. The second refers to individuals’ different traits that affect FLL. The third refers to a learners’ extrinsic and intrinsic motives. Here, we will briefly explore the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, as they will become important to our study later on.

Intrinsic motivation refers to motivations that come from within a learner (Asmari and Javid, 2011). Intrinsic motivations include feelings of competence, curiosity, and the need to know or grow (Eggen and Kauchak, 1994, p. 428). Intrinsically motivated language learners learn because they enjoy it, not for the social or economic benefits of learning a language. This has a positive influence on their foreign language performance (Farooq et al., 2017). Some studies have suggested that even intrinsically motivated language learners could have their motivation diminished by obstacles such as overly authoritative teaching and parenting styles and extrinsic rewards (Brophy, 2004; Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Extrinsic motivation refers to motivations which are external to a learner. Such motivations drives the individual to succeed because they desire a given (or perceived) outcome of success. Extrinsic motivations can be multi-faceted (Harmer, 1991), and are not always positive – i.e. they might manifest as motivation to avoid punishment (Dörnyei, 1998). In short, extrinsic motivation “involves doing an activity to attain a separable consequence, whether tangible or otherwise" (Deci et al., 2017, p. 21). Kong (2009) suggested that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation complement each other and are important in English language learning. Other scholars such as Levesque et al. (2008) have suggested that both types of motivation signify autonomous learning, even if learners' motivation is derived from different sources.

Previous research on motivation and English language learning

Several scholars have studied motivation and English language learning in a variety of national contexts. Moskovsky and Alrabai (2009) explored Saudi learners' intrinsic motivation to learn English as a foreign language through a survey of 55 Saudi EFL learners in public schools and universities. They found that the learners held an overall positive attitude toward EFL learning and that they had internal motivation that was substantially saved. Chen et al. (2005) studied the influence of culture on motivation to learn a foreign language by surveying 567 Chinese EFL learners. The survey covered motivation orientation, self-evaluated skills and expectancy. They found that there was an intervening construct in the expectancy between their study participants' self-evaluated English skills and the orientation of their motivations. They also found that integrative motivation played an insignificant role and required motivation played a significant role in learners' expectancy.

Other scholars have examined the relationship between gender and language learners' motivations. Alresheedi (2014) surveyed 75 female Saudi students' EFL learning motivation and analyzed the results using Deci and Ryan's (2000) theory of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and Gardner's (1985) instrumental/integrative theory. They found that these EFL learners were most likely to rely on instrumental motivations, followed by intrinsic, integrative, and extrinsic motivations. Besides this study, the literature on gender and EFL learning motivation in the Saudi context is relatively thin.

Mahmoodi, Kalantari, and Ghaslani (2014) studied the relationships between motivation, self-regulated learning, and language achievement by surveying 130 Iranian EFL learners. They found that there was a close relationship between self-regulated learning and motivation, and that both of these variables worked together to simplify EFL learners' learning processes and spur them to success. They also found no relationship between second language achievement and self-regulated learning, and suggested that various other factors – including teachers, materials, and the educational system – affected learners' academic behaviors and educational goals regardless of whether they were self-regulated learners or not. Other studies, such as the study by Sharma (2018), have examined the factors that influence Saudi students' and teachers' English competence and their motivation to be competent English speakers. That study found that EFL teachers and students from different colleges at the University of Jazan possessed a low level of self-reported and actual communicative competence, and that students' motivation to learn and their attitudes toward their English language teachers were strongly related.

This study will add to the literature by exploring the relationship between national political decisions, and international-level political changes (such as globalization), and Saudis' EFL learning motivation. It also contributes to the literature by examining the relationships between gender, age, and EFL learning motivation in the context of Saudi Vision 2030. We hope that this study's findings of this study will help foreign language learners, teachers, and governments to better understand and prepare for the changes in linguistic landscape that are made by political decisions.

1.2. Research questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. Have Saudis' EFL learning motives changed since the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030?
2. Were those changes in motives felt only by individuals, or were they shared and/or spread within family groups?
3. Are Saudis' EFL learning motivations in this context intrinsic or extrinsic?
4. Are there gendered differences in Saudis' EFL learning motivations in this context?
5. Are there age-related differences in Saudis' EFL learning motivations in this context?
6. What aspects of Saudis' linguistic behavior have changed in the post-Saudi Vision 2030 context?

2. Method

2.1. Participants

This study's participants included 150 Saudis (75 male and 75 female). Of these 150, 50 were aged 18–30, 50 were aged 31–40, and 50 were aged 41–55. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous, and participants provided their written consent to participate in the study. This study passed an ethical review by the Princess Nourahbint Abdulrahman University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

2.2. Instrument

This study used a 27-item Likert-style survey to gather quantitative data about participants' linguistic behaviors. Many researchers have used similar instruments for similar purposes (e.g., Alresheedi, 2014; Hashimoto, 2002; Maherzi, 2011; Mehrpour and Vojdani, 2012), not least because this method been proven to be successful in measuring people's attitudes (Croasmun and Ostrom, 2011). Participants responded to each item on a scale of 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). We included some negatively worded items to avoid the potential problem of participants answering to all the questions in the same way (Croasum and Ostrum, 2011). The survey was originally written in Arabic and was translated into English. Of the 27 items, 12 were adopted and modified from Alresheedi's (2014) research instrument. Overall, our survey included statements which sought to examine participants' extrinsic and intrinsic motivations, EFL learning motivation in general, and motivation to learn specific language skills. The instrument's validity was checked by colleagues, and we tested its reliability in a small pilot study of 20 people (10 male and 10 female).

2.3. Data collection procedures

Participants were informed about the purpose of the research. The questionnaire was distributed to them. Participants were given 20 minutes to finish it and were allowed more if needed. The researcher was available to answer any questions.

2.4. Data analysis

We used the frequency with which participants gave a given answer to determine the distribution of respondents' responses, and used their mean answers and standard deviations of their responses to determine their attitudes toward the questionnaire and form the axes of our interpretations. We used one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine differences in the respondents' answers by age and a t-test to determine differences in their answers by gender.

3. Results

Table 1 lists the survey results for five questions related to changes in EFL learners' motivations upon the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030. The letter S in all tables stands for the statement number.

Table 1. Five related questions about EFL learners' motivations in the post-Saudi Vision 2030 context.

S	Statement	f/p	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
1	My feeling about the English language changed after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030.	f	3	12	32	52	51	3.91	1.03	3
		p	2.0	8.0	21.3	34.7	34.0			
2	My feeling about learning English changed after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030.	f	3	14	18	61	54	3.99	1.02	1
		p	2.0	9.3	12.0	40.7	36.0			
3	I felt a desire to learn English after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030.	f	3	19	14	59	55	3.96	1.07	2
		p	2.0	12.7	9.3	39.3	36.7			
4	I researched how to develop my English language skills after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030.	f	3	30	27	54	36	3.60	1.12	5
		p	2.0	20.0	18.0	36.0	24.0			
5	I registered in an English language learning institute or program after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030.	f	14	62	45	19	10	2.66	1.04	4
		p	9.3	41.3	30.0	12.7	6.7			
The general mean =								3.62	0.83	

Table 1 shows that the general mean of the respondents' answers was 3.62 with a standard deviation of 0.83. This indicates that Saudis were more motivated to learn English after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030. The results also indicate that Saudis were highly motivated to change their attitudes toward English, but that they were less motivated to do their own research to improve their English or take the step of enrolling in an EFL institute or program.

Figure 1 compares results of question 1-5 from the survey of male and female study participants' EFL motivations, showing that women were generally more motivated (3.81) than men (3.44) to learn English in the wake of Saudi Vision 2030's unveiling.

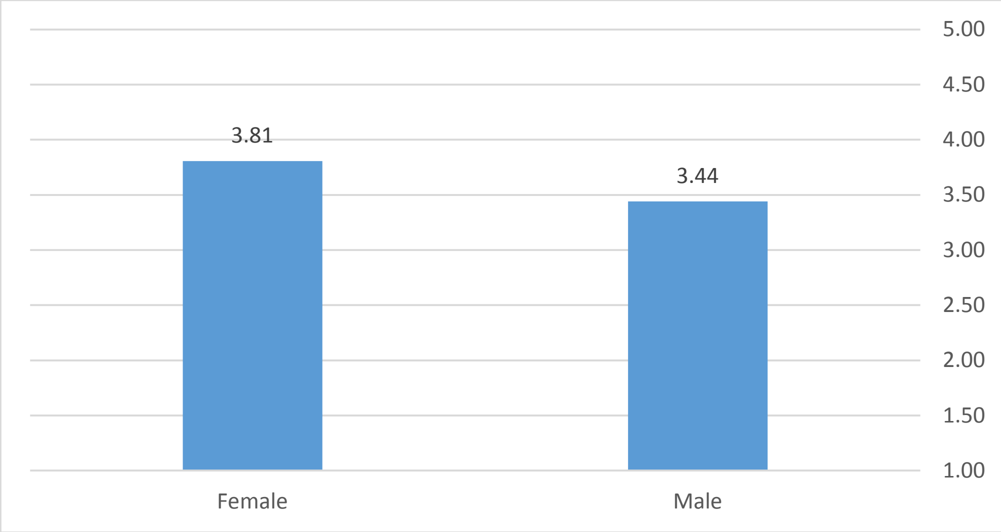

Figure 1. Male and female study participants' EFL learning motivations.

Table 2 shows the results of the t-test. The results indicate that the differences shown in Figure 1 are statistically significant, as the t-value reached (2.745) with a significance level of 0.007.

Table 2. Results of the t-test confirming differences between Saudi EFL learners' motivations by gender.

Motives for learning the English language	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.111	.294	-2.745	148	.007	-.368	.134	-.633	-.103
Equal variances not assumed			-2.745	144.59	.007	-.368	.134	-.633	-.103

Figure 2 breaks down our study participants' EFL learning motivation by age. It shows that 18–30-year-olds had the highest EFL learning motivation (mean = 3.79), 31–40-year olds were second-most motivated (3.67), and 41–55-year olds were least motivated (3.41). This implies that younger people were more motivated to learn English in the wake of Saudi Vision 2030's unveiling.

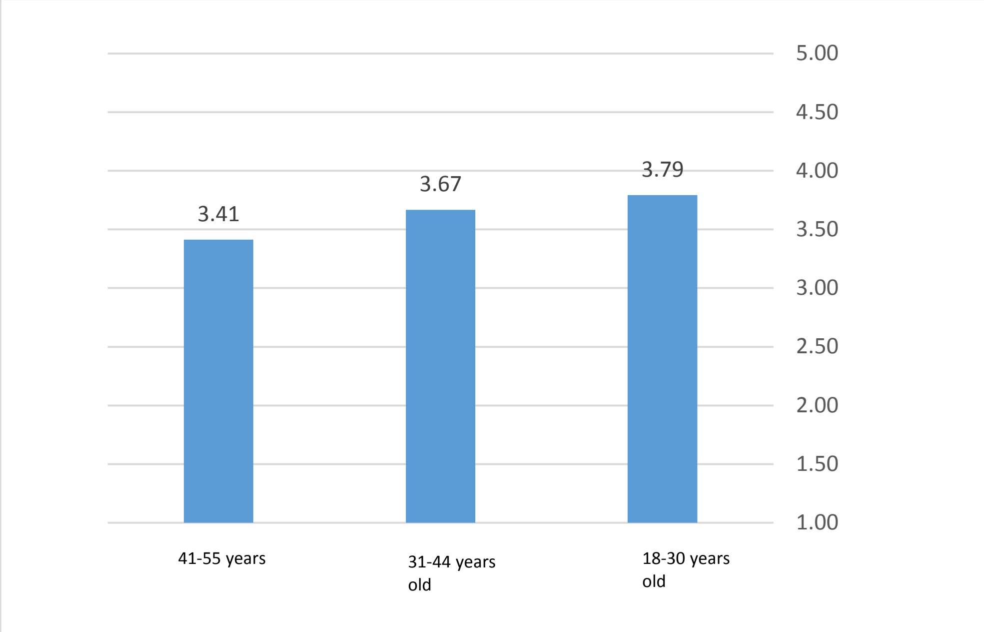

Figure 2. Comparing respondents' EFL learning motivations by age.

Table 3 shows the results of the ANOVA analysis. This analysis showed that there were no statistically significant differences in EFL learners' motivations by age – the F value was 2.732, with a significance level of 0.068. This result implies that the age-related differences in EFL learners' motivations shown in Figure 2 are not statistically significant.

Table 3. ANOVA analysis results regarding EFL learners' motivations by age.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.755	2	1.878	2.732	0.068
Within Groups	101.038	147	0.687		
Total	104.794	149			

Table 4 shows the survey results for five questions related to whether respondents felt that they were responsible for their own EFL learning or whether they felt this responsibility extended to their family. The mean answer here was 3.47 with a standard deviation of 0.77, indicating that the respondents tended to believe that they felt a sense of responsibility for their family members' EFL learning as a result of Saudi Vision 2030.

Table 4. Survey results for five questions related to self- or other-oriented responsibility for EFL learning.

S	Statement	f/p	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
6	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, I felt the desire to learn English myself.	f	15	54	46	23	12	2.75	1.09	5
		p	10.0	36.0	30.7	15.3	8.0			

7	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, I felt that I wanted my family members to learn English as well as myself.	f	2	9	16	64	59	4.13	0.92	1
		p	1.3	6.0	10.7	42.7	39.3			
8	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, I urged my family members to develop their English language skills.	f	2	18	18	59	53	3.95	1.04	2
		p	1.3	12.0	12.0	39.3	35.3			
9	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, I urged my family members to register in an EFL learning institute or program.	f	5	31	30	50	34	3.51	1.15	3
		p	3.3	20.7	20.0	33.3	22.7			
10	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, one of my family members registered in an EFL learning institute or program because of my advice.	f	13	49	28	46	14	2.99	1.17	4
		p	8.7	32.7	18.7	30.7	9.3			
The general mean =								3.47	0.77	

The results of this table indicate that most respondents felt (statement #7) and discussed (statement #8) the need to improve their English skills with their families, and urged (statement #9) their family members to take steps in this regard. However, the relatively high mean scores for these statements (4.13, SD = 0.92; 3.95, SD = 1.04; and 3.51, SD = 1.15) and relatively low mean scores for statement #10 (2.99, SD = 1.17) means that although these feelings were strongly felt, relatively few people actually acted on these feelings.

From these presented numbers, Figure 3 presents specifically that women (3.55) made more practical changes to improve their English language skills than men (3.38).

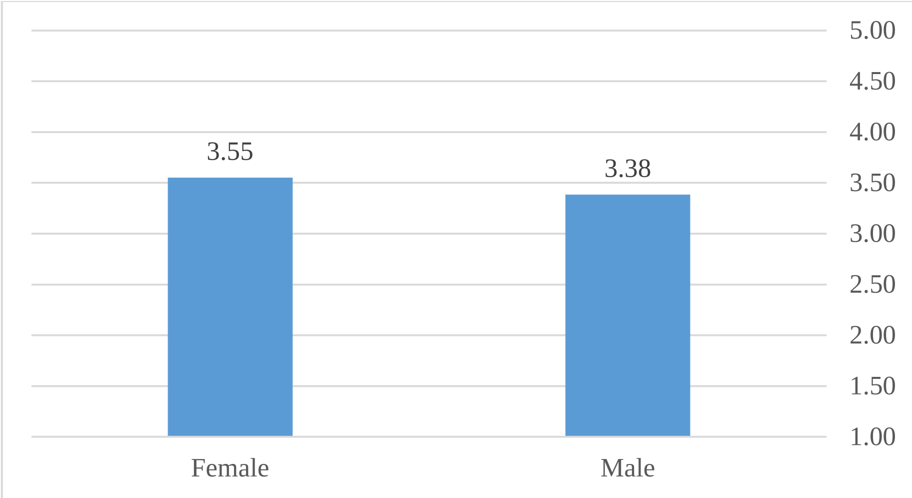

Figure 3. Comparing changes in male and female study participants' active attempts to improve their English.

Table 5 shows the results of another t-test. This one indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in male and female study participants' desire to learn English after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030 – the T-value reached (1.34) with a significant level (0.184).

Table 5. Results of the t-test to confirm gendered differences in respondents' attempts to improve their English after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030.

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	11.795	0.001	-1.34	148	0.184	-0.168	0.126	-0.417	0.081
Equal variances not assumed			-1.34	133.87	0.184	-0.168	0.126	-0.417	0.081

Figure 4 shows differences in the changes in study participants' attempts to learn English after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, by age. It shows that and 41–55-year-olds made the largest changes in behavior (mean = 3.50), 18–30-year-olds made the second-largest changes (mean = 3.48), and 31–40-year-olds made the least changes (3.42).

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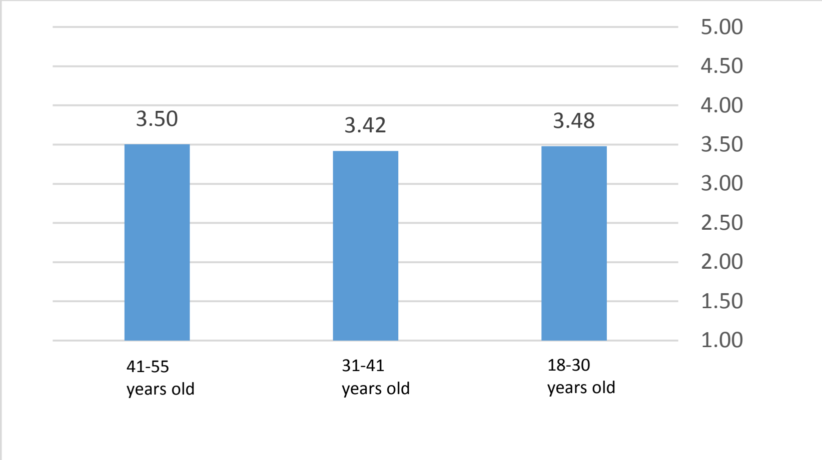

Figure 4. Comparing changes in EFL learning behavior by age

Table 6 shows the results of the ANOVA test for the data reviewed in Figure 4. The ANOVA analysis confirmed that there were no statistically significant differences by age, as the F value reached 0.155, with a relatively high significance value of 0.857.

Table 6. ANOVA results regarding differences in respondents' efforts to improve their English by age.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.187	2	0.094	0.155	0.857
Within Groups	88.759	147	0.604		
Total	88.946	149			

Measuring motivation – intrinsic or extrinsic?

Table 7 displays the study participants' responses to questions about their extrinsic motivations for learning English in the context of Saudi Vision 2030. The results indicate that the most important extrinsic motivation for Saudi EFL learners in this context was academic or career advancement (mean = 4.01, SD = 1.03), followed by reputation and social status (3.71, 1.05), respect from colleagues (3.05, 1.25), guilt for not learning English (3.02, 1.26), and job or promotion opportunities (2.73, 1.09).

Table 7. Measuring respondents' extrinsic motivations for learning English.

S	statement	f/p	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
11	When I learn English, my colleagues will respect me more.	f	22	26	45	36	21	3.05	1.25	3
		p	14.7	17.3	30.0	24.0	14.0			
12	Learning English is more important for my career and academic development than my personal development.	f	3	13	22	54	58	4.01	1.03	1
		p	2.0	8.7	14.7	36.0	38.7			
13	I have a reputation for knowing other languages, so I am trying to study English as well.	f	3	19	35	55	38	3.71	1.05	2
		p	2.0	12.7	23.3	36.7	25.3			
14	I know I have to learn English but sometimes I feel like it's a waste of time.	f	47	69	21	9	4	2.03	0.97	6
		p	31.3	46.0	14.0	6.0	2.7			
15	I try so hard to learn English because I feel guilty if I do not.	f	18	43	26	44	19	3.02	1.26	4
		p	12.0	28.7	17.3	29.3	12.7			

16	If I would not get a better degree, job, or promotion without English, I would not study it.	f	15	60	36	29	10	2.73	1.09	5
		p	10.0	40.0	24.0	19.3	6.7			
The general mean =								3.09	1.11	

Figure 5 shows the convergence of male and female respondents' extrinsic EFL learning motivations. The arithmetic means of female's extrinsic motives was 3.12, which was higher than the extrinsic motives of males was with an arithmetic mean of 3.06.

Figure 5. Comparison between male and female responses about external motives

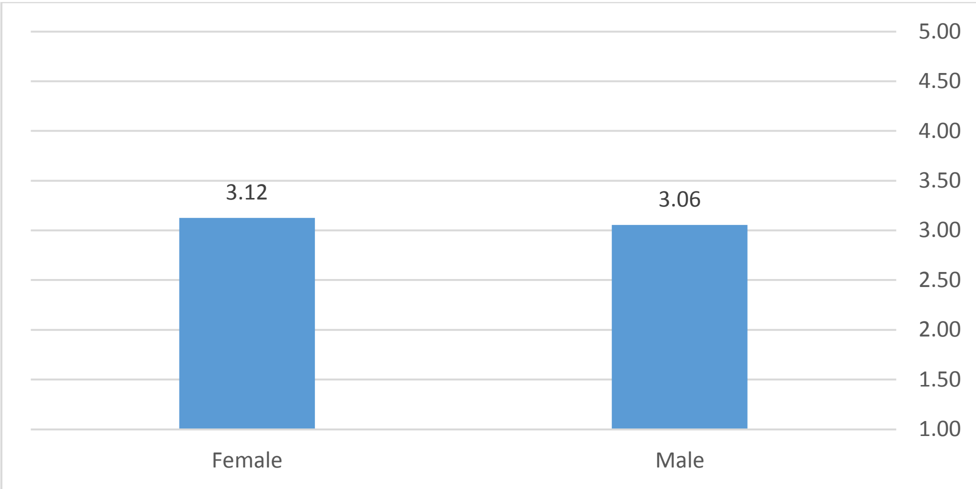

Table 7 shows the results of the t-test for the data presented in Figure 5, above. It found that there were no statistically significant differences between male and female respondents' extrinsic EFL learning motivations, as the T-value reached (0.700) at a significant level (0.485).

Table 7. Results of the t-test confirming gendered differences between respondents' extrinsic EFL learning motivations.

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	0.684	0.41	-0.7	148	0.485	-0.069	0.098	-0.263	0.126
Equal variances not assumed			-0.7	145.29	0.485	-0.069	0.098	-0.263	0.126

Figure 6 shows how respondents' extrinsic EFL learning motivations decreased as they aged. For instance, 18–30-year olds' mean values were 3.21, 31–40-year olds' mean values were 3.15, and the 41–55-year olds' mean values were 2.91.

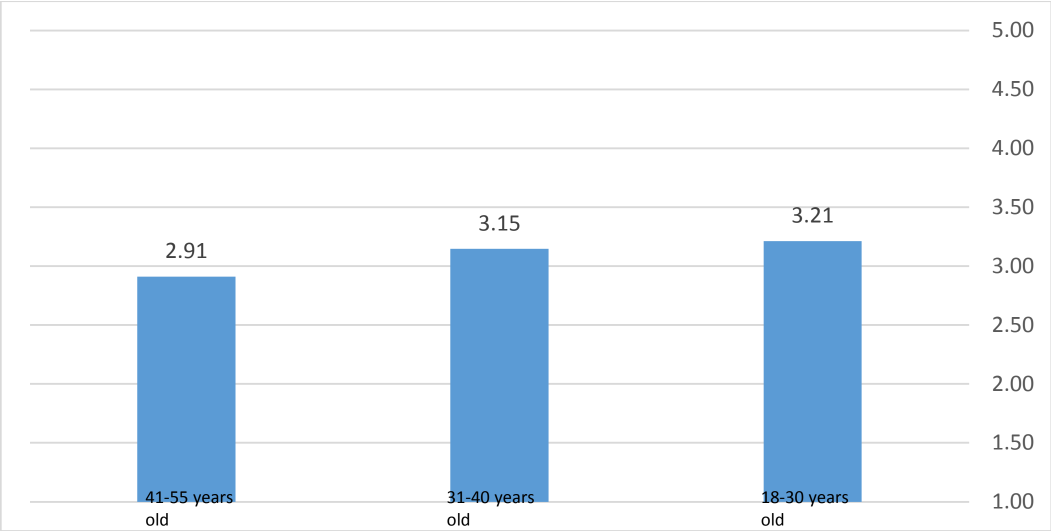

Figure 6. Comparing the external motivations of survey respondents by age.

Table 8 shows the results of the ANOVA analysis to confirm differences in EFL learners' extrinsic motivations by age. It found that there were statistically significant differences between study participants by age; as stated above, the younger the participants, the greater their external motivation for learning English. Here, the F value reached 3.631, with a significance level of 0.029.

Table 8. ANOVA results regarding differences in respondents' extrinsic EFL learning motivations by age.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.541	2	1.271	3.631	0.029
Within Groups	51.438	147	0.35		
Total	53.979	149			

Moving on, we will now discuss our study participants' intrinsic motivations. Table 9 displays the survey results for six questions asking after respondents' intrinsic EFL learning motivations.

Table 9. Survey results for six questions asking after respondents' intrinsic EFL learning motivations.

S	statement	f/p	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
17	I like to learn English because it is fun.	f	4	12	19	65	50	3.97	1.01	2
		p	2.7	8.0	12.7	43.3	33.3			
18	I enjoy speaking English outside of class.	f	4	13	30	53	50	3.88	1.05	3
		p	2.7	8.7	20.0	35.3	33.3			
19	I do not understand why some people do not like English.	f	12	26	39	46	27	3.33	1.19	5
		p	8.0	17.3	26.0	30.7	18.0			
20	I would have studied English even if it was not a requirement for graduation	f	4	17	26	55	48	3.84	1.08	4
		p	2.7	11.3	17.3	36.7	32.0			

	or employment.									
21	Learning English gives me a sense of success.	f	3	7	17	63	60	4.13	0.93	1
		p	2.0	4.7	11.3	42.0	40.0			
22	I have no intention of using English after graduation.	f	57	56	20	11	6	2.02	1.08	6
		p	38.0	37.3	13.3	7.3	4.0			
The general mean =								3.53	0.65	

The table shows that our study participants' most prominent intrinsic motivation was a feeling of success (mean = 4.13, SD = 0.93), followed by the love of learning and enjoyment of English (3.97, 1.01) – also reflected by participants' high motivation to speak English outside of class (3.88, 1.05). This was in turn followed by study participants' desire to learn English even if learning English had no academic or practical benefit (3.84, 1.08). These findings were enhanced by the fact that the scores of negatively worded statements, such as statements #19 and #22, had relatively low scores (3.33, 1.19 and 2.02, 1.08 respectively).

Figure 7 demonstrates differences in study participants' intrinsic EFL learning motivations by gender (females mean = 3.66, males = 3.40).

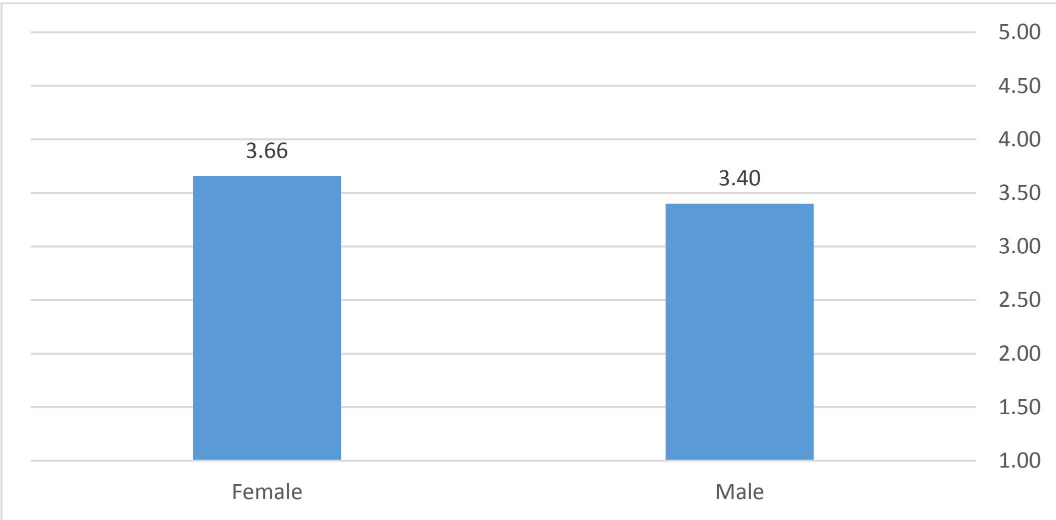

Figure 7. Comparing male and female respondents' intrinsic EFL learning motivations by gender.

Table 10 displays the results of another t-test. This test showed that the gendered differences in study participants' intrinsic EFL learning motivations were significant and statistically significant, as the t-value reached 2.462 with a significance level of 0.015.

Table 10. Results of the t-test regarding gendered differences in study participants' EFL learning motivations.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3"></td><td colspan="2">Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</td><td colspan="7">t-test for Equality of Means</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">F</td><td rowspan="2">Sig.</td><td rowspan="2">t</td><td rowspan="2">df</td><td rowspan="2">Sig. (2-tailed)</td><td rowspan="2">Mean Difference</td><td rowspan="2">Std. Error Difference</td><td colspan="2">95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lower</td><td>Upper</td></tr>
</table>

Equal variances assumed	0.208	0.649	-2.462	148	0.015	-0.258	0.105	-0.465	-0.051
Equal variances not assumed			-2.462	143.354	0.015	-0.258	0.105	-0.465	-0.051

Figure 8 displays differences in study participants' intrinsic EFL learning motivations by age. The younger our study participants were, the higher their intrinsic motivations were – 18–30-year-olds showed the highest motivation (mean = 3.65), followed by 31–40-year-olds (3.59) and 41–55-year-olds (3.35).

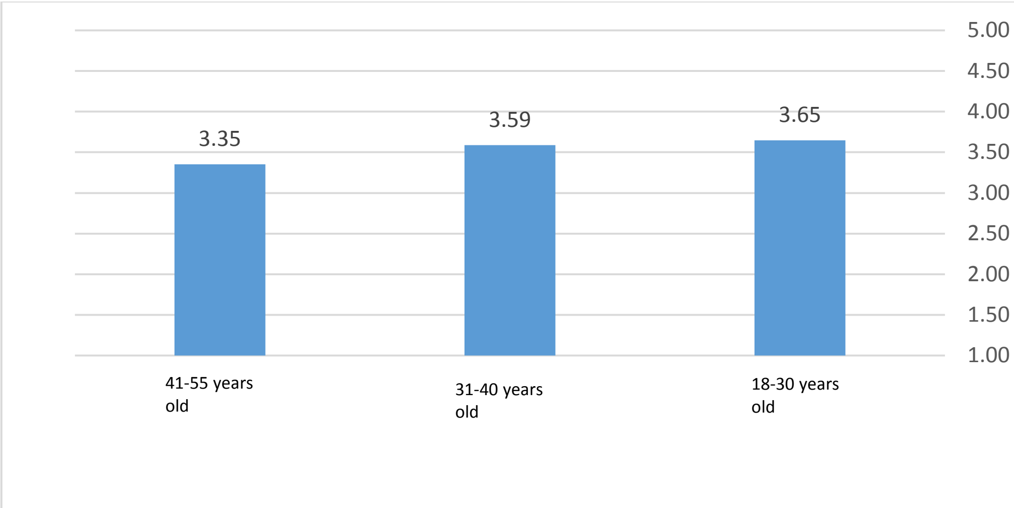

Figure 8. Comparing study participants' intrinsic EFL learning motivations by age.

Table 11 displays the results of the ANOVA analysis for the data reviewed in Figure 8. It showed that there were no statistically significant differences between study participants' intrinsic EFL learning motivations by age; the F value was 2.897 and the significance level was 0.060.

Table 11. Results of the ANOVA analysis of differences in study participants' intrinsic EFL learning motivations by age.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.401	2	1.201	2.897	0.060
Within Groups	60.918	147	0.414		
Total	63.319	149			

Figure 9 compares study participants' answers for questionnaire items asking after their intrinsic and extrinsic EFL learning motivations. The figure shows that respondents were more motivated by intrinsic (mean = 3.53) than extrinsic (3.09) means.

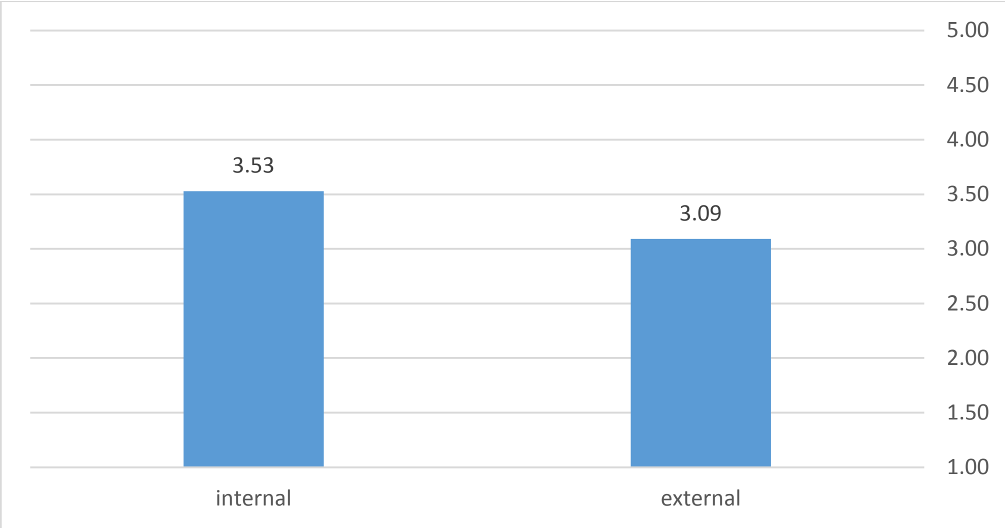

Figure 9. Comparing the mean values of study participants’ answers for questions on their intrinsic and extrinsic EFL learning motivations.

Table 12 displays the results of another t-test. This test indicates that there are statistically significant differences between study participants’ extrinsic EFL learning motivations by age, as the T-value reached a significant level (0.000). This indicates that the younger a study participant was, the higher their sense of extrinsic EFL learning motivation.

Table 12. Results of the t-test for differences between study participants’ intrinsic and extrinsic EFL learning motivations by age.

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.11	0.293	-6.058	298	0	-0.4389	0.07244	-0.5815	-0.2963
Equal variances not assumed			-6.058	296.123	0	-0.4389	0.07244	-0.5815	-0.2963

What linguistic elements do new Saudi English speakers focus on?

Now we will move on to examining which linguistic elements new Saudi English speakers focus on. Table 13 displays the survey results for questions asking after respondents’ practice and development of certain aspects of English.

Table 13. Changes in Saudis' linguistic behavior following the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030.

S	Statement	f/p	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
23	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, I was keen to develop my spoken and listening English skills.	f	3	22	32	57	36	3.67	1.06	2
		p	2.0	14.7	21.3	38.0	24.0			
24	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, I was keen to develop my written English skills.	f	6	26	32	53	33	3.54	1.13	4
		p	4.0	17.3	21.3	35.3	22.0			
25	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, I was keen to develop my English reading skills.	f	4	23	36	54	33	3.59	1.08	3
		p	2.7	15.3	24.0	36.0	22.0			
26	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, I was keen to develop my understanding of English grammar.	f	5	25	43	45	32	3.49	1.10	5
		p	3.3	16.7	28.7	30.0	21.3			
27	After the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, I was keen to increase my English vocabulary.	f	6	17	26	56	45	3.78	1.12	1
		p	4.0	11.3	17.3	37.3	30.0			
The general mean =								3.62	1.01	

Overall, respondents' mean was 3.62 with a standard deviation of 1.01. This indicates that most respondents moved to change their EFL learning behavior after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030. Table 13 also shows the order in which our study participants focused on particular aspects of English – they prioritized vocabulary memorization skills (mean = 3.78, SD = 1.12), then their spoken and listening English skills (3.67, 1.06), reading skills (3.59, 1.08), written English skills (3.54, 1.13), and understanding of English grammar (3.49, 1.10).

Figure 10 breaks down how respondents' focus on particular language skills differed by gender. Overall, the figure shows that women reported a more intense focus on each skill than men. Both men and women prioritized improving their memorization vocabulary (women's mean = 4.00, men's = 3.56), followed by their spoken and listening English skills (3.95 and 3.40, respectively). These were followed by reading (3.81), grammatical understanding (3.76), and writing (3.68) for women and writing (3.40), reading (3.37), and grammatical understanding (3.23) for men. Figure 11 shows the overall difference in women's' reported focus on developing their English language skills following the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030 (3.84) compared to men (3.39).

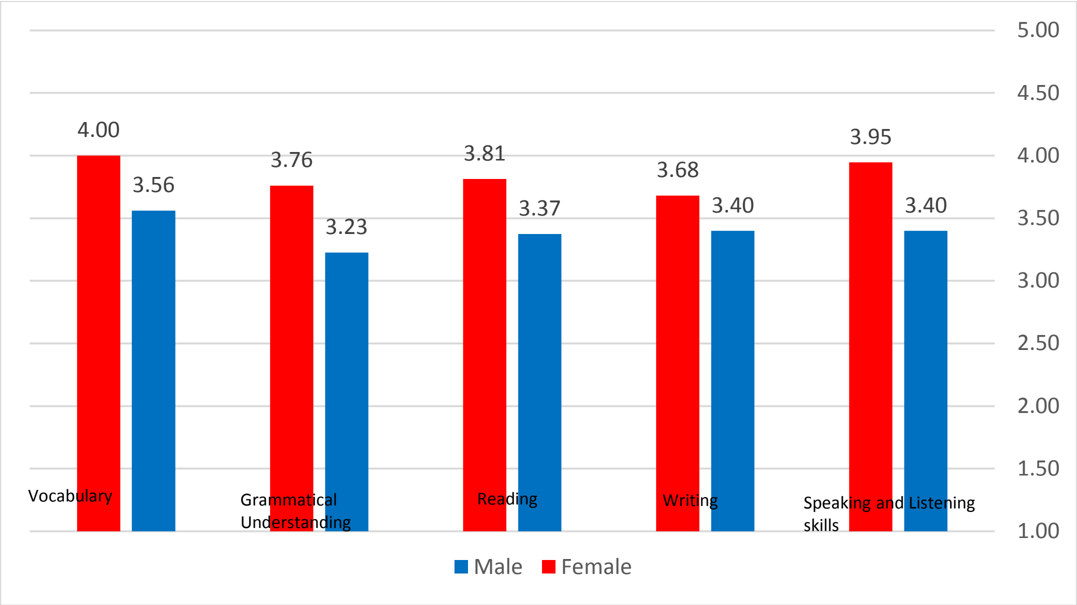

Figure 10. Comparing EFL learners' focus on particular English language skills after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, by gender.

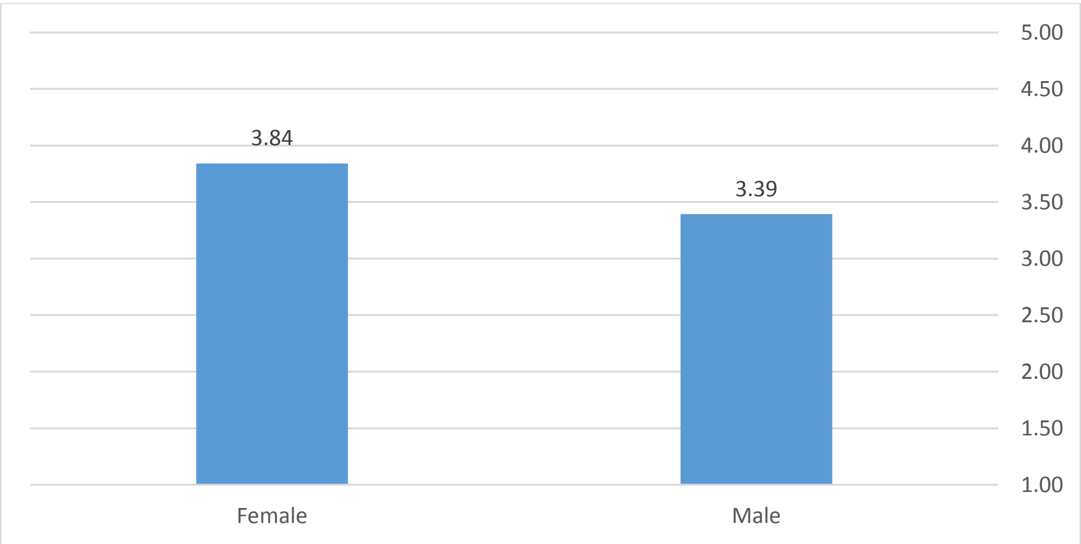

Figure 11. Comparing men's and women's focus on developing their general English language skills after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030.

Table 14 displays the results of another t-test. The results show that there are statistically significant differences between our male and female participants' focus on developing their English language skills: the T-value reached 2.760 with a significance level of 0.007.

Table 14. Results of the t-test for differences between female and male study participants' focus on developing their English after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030.

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.129	0.147	-2.76	148	0.007	-0.448	0.162	-0.769	-0.127
Equal variances not assumed			-2.76	144.308	0.007	-0.448	0.162	-0.769	-0.127

Figure 13 displays differences in respondents' desire to develop their English skills broken down by age. It indicates that the younger our study participants were, the more they desired to improve and develop their general English language skills.

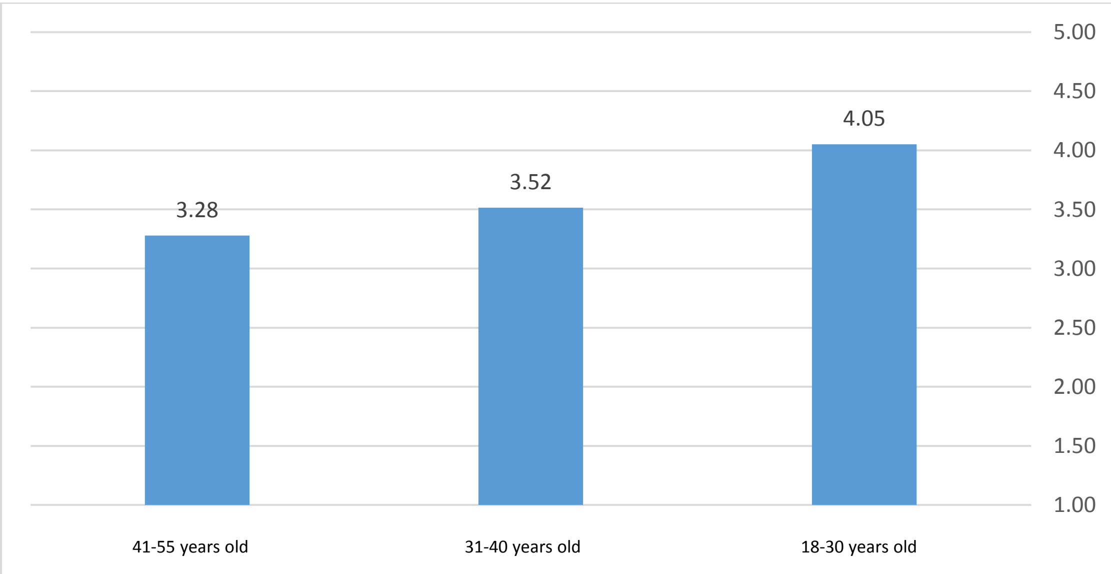

Figure 13. Comparing study participants' desire to develop their general English language skills after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, by age.

Table 15 shows the results of another ANOVA test. This test showed that there are statistically significant differences in our respondents' reported desire to develop their general English language skills, in favor of the younger age groups: the F value was 8.326, with a significance level of 0.000.

Table 15. Results of the ANOVA test for differences in our study participants' desire to improve their general English skills after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030, by age.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.65	2	7.825	8.326	0
Within Groups	138.15	147	0.94		
Total	153.8	149			

4. Discussion

Here, we discuss our results by answering our research questions. The first research question asked whether Saudis' motives to learn English have changed since the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030. Our results indicate that their motivations toward learning English did indeed change, because their answers in our survey trended toward agreeing with the assertion that their motivations changed. Their feelings and emotions that aroused the motives toward learning/developing their English language ranked highest, where most participants agreed on it. It can be said that the announcement of the Saudi 2030 Vision was an arousal that assisted the motivation of Saudis toward foreign language learning, in this case English language. This adds to the literature that a country's political decision does effect the motives of its citizens towards foreign language learning.

Our second research question investigated whether these changes in EFL learning motives were only felt by individuals or shared/spread by and within family groups. Our findings indicate that most people spread this sense of responsibility and desire to improve their English language abilities within their family groups (usually to their children or relatives). This finding is corroborated by the findings of Daniel et al. (2018), who found that "parental encouragement" plays "the most significant role during the development of motivational intensity, desire to learn English, and attitude toward learning English" (p. 1).

Our third research question asked whether Saudis' EFL learning motivations after the announcement of Saudi Vision 2030 were intrinsic or extrinsic. Our findings indicate that their motivations were more intrinsic than extrinsic. From a language learning perspective, this is considered positive, as Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) point out that extrinsic motivation may affect second language skill development.

Our fourth research question asked whether there were gendered differences in our study participants' EFL learning motives. Our findings indicate that Saudi women were significantly more motivated to improve and develop their English language skills than men in the post-Saudi Vision 2030 context. This confirms the findings of Sengkey (2018) and Akram and Ghani (2013), who emphasized that women are more motivated to learn English than men.

Our fifth research question asked whether there were differences in our study participants' EFL learning motives by age. Our results show that although there were minor differences (which showed that younger participants were more motivated), these differences were not statistically significant. This aligns with Uribe et al. (2008), who suggested that age has a direct effect on EFL learning motives, and that younger EFL learners tend to be slightly more motivated to learn a second language than their older counterparts. Furthermore, Liu (2007) noted that Chinese university students' EFL learning motivation was tied to "the fact that the rapid development of economy in China in recent years has yielded an increasingly high demand for university graduates with high English competency in various fields such as education, market, business and science and technology" (p. 139), implying that younger people have more conscious of the economic value of English in a globalized world.

Our sixth and final research question asked which English language skills our study participants focused on in the post-Saudi Vision 2030 context, and whether these foci differed by age or gender. We found that they prioritized increasing their English vocabulary above all. This confirms Sadeghi's (2013) finding that highly motivated learners tend to have more vocabulary knowledge than less motivated learners. This suggests that motivated learners seek to develop their vocabulary to stimulate further learning. We also found that our study participants focused on their spoken communication skills second, and that their foci changed by gender from third-highest priority of focus on down. We also noted that women were more motivated to develop specific English language skills than men and that younger study participants were more motivated to develop their English language skills than their older counterparts.

5. Conclusions

This study found that people's foreign language learning is affected by the policies, domestic politics, and foreign policy of their countries' governments. The context of Saudi Vision 2030 shows how citizens' EFL learning motivations develop in reaction to their leaders' decisions, and that these motives are widely intrinsic. We also found that women were more motivated than men, younger study participants were more motivated than older ones, and all participants focused most on developing their vocabulary and least on their grammatical acumen.

This study has a few limitations. It had relatively few participants. Future studies could use a larger sample size, examine people's motivation for learning other foreign languages such as French and Chinese, examine EFL or general foreign language learning in other contexts, and examine which languages Saudis are most interested and motivated to learn in more detail. We hope that this study will open doors to linguists, researchers, language teachers, and learners and facilitate a deeper understanding of the effect that political decisions have on our motives and strategies for learning languages.

Acknowledgment

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A semantic evaluation of ideological positioning in awareness campaign against Covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria and Iraq from appraisal framework perspective

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Abstract

The outbreak of novel corona virus known as covid-19 stimulates discussions across the mainstream and new media with underlying purpose to educate people to take precautionary measures against the pandemic. As scholars see ideology as an ingredient for all discourse, the present paper deploys the appraisal framework to evaluate the attitudinal positions in forming ideology through which the language users aligned themselves in what they are conveyed about the covid-19 to their audience to either favour or disfavour particular viewpoints. The study which generates ten texts on the covid-19 from mainstream media and equal number of texts from new media in Nigeria and Iraq reveals in its findings that 'interpersonal' mode of meaning-making dominates the covid-19 discourse when compared to the domains of attitudinal and dialogistic meaning-making using appraisal framework. The ideologically evaluation of the data shows that linguistic expressions on the Covid-19 regardless of the geographical location of the language users encourage solidarity on common issues or challenges about the pandemic by persuading people to take common action against these issues or challenges.

Keywords: ideology; appraisal framework; attitude; graduation; engagement

1. Introduction

For several decades, scholars see the term 'ideology' as complex that defies single linguistic definition because the concept has a whole range of useful meanings and not all of which are compatible with each other (Eagleton, 1991:1). The outbreak of novel Corona Virus Disease 2019 known as COVID-19 stimulates discussions across the globe with underlying purposes to educate people to take precautionary measures against the pandemic. Eccleshall et. al (2003) and Bedu (2016) see ideology as an ingredient that portrays the attitudinal positions in which the language users aligned themselves to what they convey to their audience in either favour or disfavour a particular viewpoint. In this regard, the discourse on covid-19 in both mainstream and new media can't be divorced from the ideological inclination that is the characteristic of all social issues.

From the principles of systemic functional linguistic theory of Halliday and his associates (Halliday, 1994), the concept of ideology falls within 'interpersonal' mode of meaning-making in the language use as one of the three 'meta functions' that include ideational and textual meta functions

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(Bedu, 2019). As put forward by Eagleton (1991) that ideology is an inquiry into the ways in which people invest in their own (un)happiness in discourse, the ideology as the interpersonal mode of language always encodes the subjectivity of writers'/speakers' in the texts by advancing their stances towards the material world as they present them in their communication. However, the ideology is the single concept that always links the text to social issues like politics. The evaluation of the ideological positioning in the text would help language users and consumers to understand the relations of meaning and power relations in the language (Lemke, 1995:2)

The present study therefore adopts the appraisal framework to semantically evaluate the ideological positioning in the campaign to create awareness against the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria and Iraq. The evaluative meaning described by the adopted appraisal framework in this study can unveil linguistic mechanisms in which the interpersonal meta function operates in addition to revealing the feelings, tastes and opinions in construing all the propositions in the awareness campaign against the pandemic in the two countries in order to ascertain where the campaign aligns or dis aligns with the value positions of the current communicative context.

2. Literature Review

From the available related works on the appraisal framework, the proponents of the framework postulate three broad sub-domains to evaluate meaning-making in the text. All the three sub-domains that aids the analysis of the meaning-making of the appraisal framework fall within the ambit of semiotics which is the linguistic phenomenon that is widely regarded as interpersonal meta function of language. The three broad sub-domains that the appraisal framework utilizes in investigating the meaning-making are attitude, graduation and engagement.

2.1 Attitude: Positive/negative assessment

The term "attitude' in the literature is referred to the system of evaluating meanings of text in which the addressees are positioned to adopt a positive or negative view about the text content" (Martin and White, 2005: 26). Such positive and negative evaluations are embedded in the text through on the following three strands:

(a) emotional reactions which known as 'affect' in the appraisal framework;

(b) assessments of human behaviour and character by reference to some system of conventionalised or institutionalised norms that is known as 'judgement' in the appraisal framework; and

(c) assessments of artefacts, texts, natural objects, states of affairs and processes in terms of how they are assigned value socially, for example in terms of their aesthetic qualities, their potential for harm or benefit, their social significance which are all termed as 'appreciation' (White, 2015).

For account of these three attitudinal categories of appraisal framework, consider the following discussions as presented in Martin and White (2015: 45).

1. Attitude: affect (assessment as an emotion)

"Asked if he ever wished the coin toss had gone the other way, McCarthy gives an uncharacteristic –but still brief – pause before answering.

"No" he said. "<u>I'm glad I got to do it. I'm glad</u> [affect –positive assessment via emotional] I got to do what I was trained to do...."

2. Attitude: judgement (assessment of human behaviour and/or character by reference to ethics and other social norms)

"The quick-thinking [Judgment—a positive assessment of human capacity] and incredible heroism [Judgement—positive assessment of human tenacity] of Secret Service agent Tim McCarthy probably saved the 70-year-old President Reagan from taking another bullet".

3. Attitude: Appreciation (assessment of artifacts, entities, happenings, and states of affairs by reference to aesthetics and other systems of social valuation)

"Thirty years ago this week, Secret Service agent Tim McCarthy set out for work at the White House in a brand-new suit, the nicest [Appreciation—positive assessment by reference to aesthetic impact] one he'd ever owned".

The underlined constructions in (1), (2) and (3) above illustrate the basis for the various attitudinal assessments especially the nature of what is being assessed, what is at stake socially, and whether the attitude is conveyed explicitly or implicitly. Such evaluative variability can offer us adequate insight on what is at stake when we come across such attitudinal meanings in the data analysis.

2.2 Graduation: Force and semantic focus

A key parameter of variation in the interpersonal meaning-making is the degree of the speaker/writer's personal investment in the propositions being advanced in the text. In the appraisal framework, the graduation as the sub-domain of the framework deals with "grading phenomena especially where feelings of the text author are amplified and categories blurred" in form of "focus" and "force" (Martin and White, 2005: 35). This subdomain is specifically dealing with the notions of "force" that centred on meaning propositions to either strengthen or mitigate the meaning making in the text, while on one hand, "focus" deals with the meanings by which the boundaries of semantic categories can be blurred or sharpened.

A distinction in the two sub-domains of graduation is made between intensifications and mitigations where the scaling semantic is fused with another meaning in a single lexical item and those where the scaling is conveyed via an isolated term (White, 2015).

I. Force as resources are used to indicate intensification/mitigation in the language use. This linguistic phenomenon in appraisal framework literature is considered as either fused or isolated that shows "adjustments" of the degree in the evaluations. In some literature, the force is subdivided into *raise* (e.g. better, best, yes-yes, yes! YES, really big, etc.) and *lower* (e.g. a little, a bit, somewhat, least bit, etc.). Consider the following:

1. Force (intensification/mitigation): fused.

Agent McCarthy, in a superhero [intensified judgment] move, used his body as a shield.

2. Force (intensification/mitigation): isolated.

"It was a very [intensified appreciation] new suit, so it wasn't one of those cheap suits I had."

II. Focus (sharpening/blurring of semantic boundaries) as linguistic resources used in the non-gradable context, it "has the effect of adjusting the strength of boundaries between categories, constructing core and peripheral types of things" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 37). It is subdivided into *sharpen* (e.g. award-winning, all alone, etc.) and *soften* (e.g. sort of, kind of, somewhat like etc.). Consider the following example:

3. Agent McCarthy has shifted his body into a wide stance and is literally [Focus—indicating a sharply focused concept of "shielding" applies here] shielding President Reagan.

2.3 Engagement: Resources of dialogistic positioning

Under the appraisal framework, engagement is "directed towards identifying the particular dialogic positioning associated with a given meaning and towards describing what is at stake when one meaning rather than another is employed" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 97). This sub-domain is made up of the following:

a. "Monoglossia –no reference to other viewpoint in the text as in the following statements:
i. The sky is blue
ii. The earth goes round the sun
b. Heteroglossia –reference to other viewpoints as illustrated below:
i. According to astronomers, the earth goes round the sun
ii. Astronomers say "the earth goes round the sun"
iii. The astronomers convinced that the earth goes round the sun
iv. The astronomers confirmed that the earth goes round the sun"
(adopted from Martin & White, 2005, p. 97)

In the above formulations, the mechanisms by which speakers/writers adopt different stances vis-à-vis the attitudinal propositions being advanced are accordingly dealt with as instances of dialogistic "engagement."

3. Appraisal Framework

The principles of appraisal theory were developed by Martin and White (2005) as an elaborate system that is largely drawn from the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to allow linguistic analysis of a text from the perspective of the evaluative properties of the text. The framework is concerned with three fundamental issues:

a. How text producers (writers or speakers) construe particular authorial identities for themselves.
b. How authors align/disalign themselves with actual or potential respondents of their text
c. How these writers or speakers construct an ideal audience for their texts

The centrality of the appraisal framework and its application are based on three broad sub-domains of evaluative meaning that include:

i. values of the positive and negative view points in the name of 'attitude' within the appraisal framework;
ii. values of the intensity or force of propositions that is raised or lowered through 'graduation'; and
iii. values of the speaker/writer where (s)he engages with the other voices and alternative value positions that play role in the communicative context through 'engagement' sub-domain.

Appraisal framework, as one of the most sophisticated tools, is oriented towards uncovering the author's attitude and the way in which the text aligns with a potential or real readers or listeners. In this regard, the framework is worthy for analysing the expressions in order to explain both the overt and covert attitude of the language users in creating awareness against covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria and Iraq for the benefit of its targeted audience. The general overview of the appraisal systems is captured and presented in figure (1) below:

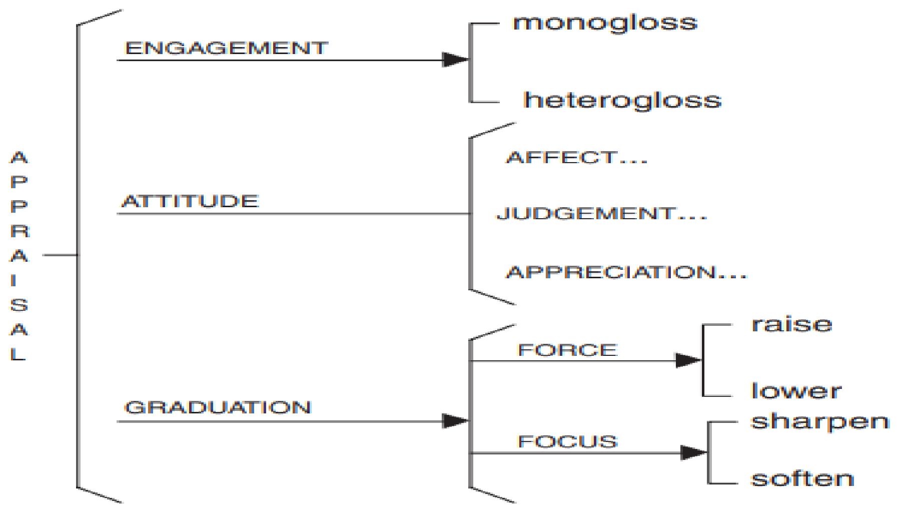

Figure 1. An overview of appraisal resources (Martin & White 2005: 38)

In view of the above assumption, the study of media discourse on covid-19 pandemic in Nigeria and Iraq on the basis of the appraisal systems will be more fruitful as you can see in section 5.0.

4. Data Collection and Methodology

There are several media texts on ConoraVirus (Covid-19) since the outbreak of the pandemic in Wuhan Province in China in December 2019. The spread of the plague across different countries in the different continents prompted discourse in both mainstream and new media on possible measures to avert or slow down the spread of the pandemic. In this regard, the study generates ten main stream media texts on Covid-19 and equal number of texts from new media in Nigeria and Iraq that form the data of the present research. The study adopts 'qualitative' method of the appraisal framework to interpret and evaluate the ideological positioning in the media campaign against the pandemic. Ten media texts of equal proportion were generated from Nigerian and Iraqi mainstream and new media. The analysis tries to explore the relevance of the three broad sub-domains that the appraisal framework utilizes in investigating meaning-makings that are attitude, graduation and engagement with a view to exploring and analyzing range of semantic and pragmatic interfaces in the ideological reproduction and persuasion in the Covid-19 awareness texts.

5. Data Analysis

The characteristic of appraisal study entails discourse-semantics that focuses on three interacting domains which the present paper, in this section, attempts to explore some of their ideologically positions in the data that elicited from traditional and new media in the two countries.

Attitude form of appraisal is a semantic indicator that is concerned with text producer's feelings which include emotional reactions, judgements of behaviour and evaluation of things through the discourse. The Attitude as a domain in discourse-semantic is divided into three regions of feeling, i.e., 'affect', 'judgement' and 'appreciation'.

Affect concerns with resources for construing emotional reactions, for example, feeling of shock in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic:

4. With closure of work due to Coronavirus, those with salaries and regular incomes will merely feel the deficit, <u>it's saddened that those dependent on cash coming in every day will not have the money to buy food. How many hundreds will come out of the lockdown without food, and will the</u>

food only come to them when there are food riots? Where will these riots take place – the urban slums, in the congested heart of cities, on the streets where pay day labourers are struggling hard and desperately to stop dying of hunger? (Facebook Nigeria text 1)

The proposition of the underlined structure in example (4) above, it's saddened that those dependent on cash coming in every day will not have the money to buy food. semantically depicts emotional state of the language user about the lockdown and restrictions of people's movement due to the pandemic and the resultant makes people especially low income earners to loss their source of livelihood.

Similarly, the language users in Covid-19 discourse express such attitude of affection across various communities in Nigeria where over seventy five percent of its 200 million population are low income earners. There is also a similar proposition relates to attitude of affect in the data that were elicited from media news on Covid-19 in Iraq as provided in (5) below:

5. For decades, Iraq has been ravaged by war and unprecedented level of destruction that has decimated its infrastructure, governance and most importantly its people. On sad note, unlike many developed countries around the world, the Iraqi health care service that once an envy of Middle Eastern nations cannot adequately test its citizens for the coronavirus pandemic nor does it have the capacity to treat large numbers of the sick and dying.

The excerpt in (5) above not only indicates attitude of affection but it also contains the attitude of judgement where the writer hinges his assessment on the good infrastructure and effective system of governance of the country; some years back, Iraq according to such attitude of judgement can handle such emerging challenges like the covid-19 plague unlike now when the country needs critical health facilities and latest technology to deal with the pandemic in the Iraq.

From the construal of attitude of judgment and its ideological standpoint, the language user in underlined structure in the above excerpt (5) utilizes linguistic expression that its function is purely interpersonal in meaning to achieve his/her judgment by using negative epistemic modality '**cannot**' which in many scholarly researches argue that such linguistic phenomena has to do with the knowledge and belief of the author. In this regard, the use of negative epistemic modality reflects the negative judgments and assumptions of the text writer towards Iraqi capacity to adequately protect its citizen against the covid-19. The text producer further emphasizes this judgment by using a negative comparative reference of cohesive device **'nor'** to re-assert his judgment that the pandemic can overwhelm Iraq's health service capabilities.

Another attitudinal meaning in the covid-19 related texts in Nigeria and Iraq is that of appreciation. According to Martin and White (2005: 43) appreciation involves evaluations of semiotic and natural phenomena in showing value of the certain in the discourse. In one of the speeches of President Buhari of Nigeria on covid-19 that gains huge social media trending contains evaluative expressions that indicated the appreciation as you can see in excerpts (6) and (7) below:

6. Indeed, the Director-General of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) was one of ten global health leaders invited by the World Health Organisation to visit China and understudy their response approach. I am personally very proud of Dr Ihekweazu for doing this on behalf of all Nigerians.

7. I will take this opportunity to thank all our public health workforce, health care workers, Port health authorities and other essential staff on the front lines of the response for their dedication and commitment. You are true heroes

Based on Bedu (2019), the boldface expressions in the above excerpt are ideologically motivated as the language user personally involved himself in the discourse. Such typical form is what scholars dub as personal metadiscourse marker as in 'I am personally very proud of' and 'I will take this opportunity to thank' in (6) and (7) respectively, to reflect his attitudinal meaning of appreciations to for his 'reactions' to things to not only please but winning the heart of the frontline workforce to do more to contain the spread of the disease as seen in the structure (7). The appreciation is amplified where Mr. Buhari extols the 'value' of the frontline personnel about their innovative, authentic and timely efforts and dedication to slow the spread of the pandemic in his country.

In this regard, appreciation as a form of attitude within appraisal framework contains personal markers which are elements that reflect the degree of text-producer presence in contributing to the varying issues in the tenor of a text. This justifies our earlier assumption that appreciation is always interpersonal mode of metafunction of language.

As the dominant feature in both oral and written discourse is the dialoguing that scholars see as the main function of the language in facilitating communication (Heine, 1997: 3), the dialogic perspective of language forms what Martin and White (2005) term as engagement in the appraisal framework. The data equally reveal dialogic exchanges in covid-19 related texts by making it people-oriented discourse to accomplish their purposes and goals to make people prepared against the pandemic as you can see below in one of the Facebook posts:

8. The stay at home order helps in two ways. First it averts or slows the spread down of covid-19 in Nigeria and secondly when you stay at home it gives one's mind a sense of normality. When people are at home it keeps them mentally more balanced because they are basically living life as they always have in their house things that are pretty much the same and it can help them to stay out of panic mode.

From its formulation, the above extract on the Corona is 'monoglossia' in nature as it doesn't reveal the influence of, refer to, or to take up in some way, what has been said / written before. In this case, the language user didn't make any reference to someone's viewpoints but rather it shows high degree of the personal concern and mobilizes people to see the importance of staying at home order to avert or slow down the spread of the pandemic in Nigeria. However, the data from Iraqi mainstream media show the degree to which writers acknowledge the source of their information which the principle of appraisal called as 'heteroglossia' in the sense of Martin and White (2005) that Bakhtin (1986) named as intertextuality. Consider the excerpt in (9) as the way of engagement.

9. The Iraqi Health Ministry on Tuesday <u>reported</u> 4,576 new COVID-19 cases, the highest daily increase since the outbreak of the disease, bringing the total nationwide infections to 184,709. It also <u>reported</u> 82 fatalities during the day, raising the death toll to 6,036, while 2,895 more patients recovered in the day, bringing the total number of recoveries to 131,840.

The underlined words 'reported' are attributed elements as in 'the Iraqi Health Ministry on Tuesday <u>reported</u> 4,576 new COVID-19 cases' and 'it also <u>reported</u> 82 fatalities during the day'. These attributed elements indicate not only the way in which the text producer makes reference to other viewpoints but is giving face value to the text to convince the readers to accept the content of the text.

In this sense, the heteroglossia in the appraisal framework is typical form of Bakhtin's (1986) intertextuality where text-producers craft the texture of their discourse by blending prior texts with their own ideas in new ways for communicative and ideological purposes (Thamer and Bedu, 2019: 60). Intertextuality refers to connecting discourse to other discourses which were produced earlier and harmonized them in a single text (Bakhtin, 1986; Fairclough, 2003; Wodak, 2005). From appraisal perspective, engagement deals with Heterogloss and Monogloss expressions. In the data analysis, hetero-gloss means dialogue involving multiple actors and mono-gloss refers to monologue.

Another appraisal device that the data exhibits in this study is the graduation. The graduation device enables author of a text to strongly align or less strongly align with the value position being advanced in the text and in addition to reveal his shared value and belief associated with those positions. Consider the following:

10. Power outage denies us enjoying the charity of Covid-19 The COVID-19 pandemic in its charitable manner has forced many of us to drastically adjust our daily lives and restrict them at home. As part of precautionary measures, people are modifying the way they work to prevent transmission of the virus in our communities and to protect the health and safety of ourselves and families. Schools and business premises are temporarily closed and public events are on hold until further notice. In some parts of the world, such operations continue virtually, with all those responsible working from home. Unfortunately, electricity (power) outage in Maiduguri has crippled the ability of people like me to utilize the technology and its flexibility to continue most of our work from home despite our commitment even before the outbreak of the pandemic to demonstrate how adaptable we are in difficult situation.

Here the adjectives '*drastically'* and '*temporarily'* are employed as the authorial voice for degree of evaluation and investment in the proposition being advanced in the text. The reference of the adjectival lexical item '*drastically'* is to indicate a graduation of '*force*' in which the meaning of the proposition is strengthened while that of '*temporarily'* is a force in which the meaning of the proposition is mitigated. Another form of the graduation in the above text is the focus where the author utilizes the past tensed verb '*crippled*' for preciseness and sharpness of focus to emphasis a sufficient condition to influence the readers to believe the proposition of the text from evaluative point of views.

Apart from lexical induced focus of graduation, some of the text authors in the data precisely achieve the focus by using a part or whole structure as you can see in the information drawn from Iraqi data in (11) below:

11. Inexplicably, one of Iraq's largest cities and Daesh's former stronghold of Mosul has only recorded five new corona cases despite having a population of 1.5 million. New cases are few and far between, and this can likely be explained by the fact that Mosul's health infrastructure was almost destroyed during operations to recapture the city from Daesh militants between 2016 and 2017.

This kind of graduation is called 'force' for intensification or mitigation in the clause '*Inexplicably, one of Iraq's largest cities and Daesh's former stronghold of Mosul*' and the structure '*this can likely be explained by the fact that Mosul's health infrastructure was almost destroyed during operations to recapture the city from Daesh militants between 2016 and 2017*'. Such are typical type of non-gradable resources that form graduation through phrasal or complete structure which in turn has the effect of adjusting the "strength of boundaries between categories which known as 'focus'" in the appraisal framework literature.

6. Discussion

A glimpse at the data analysis, it is clear that language users depend completely on their psychology and feelings as well as their general knowledge, background knowledge, and shared knowledge to arrange and present their thought in the text production. The three properties of appraisal framework (attitude, graduation and engagement) indicate the roadmap in which the text producers utilze to build his/her assumptions and ideas in relation to the topic of the communication.

The data analysis indicates that interpersonal mode of meaning-making is crucial devices in all discourse which the langauge users can utilize to not only engage and influence readers but also direct and signal to them the propositional content and organization of information of the texts so as to make the readers/hearer to have easy understanding and interpretation of the actual issues in the discourse.

7. Conclusion

The discussion of the data and the findings reveal that texts on COVID-19 are unified by common linguistic phenomena. The findings show that the authors' propositions in all text can be ideologically evaluated using the appraisal framework. The paper, which utilizes the research tools of appraisal framework to investigate the evaluative meaning developed in both mainstream and new media text on covid-19 in Nigeria and Iraq, discovers that the ‘interpersonal’ mode of meaning-making in the covid-19 discourse in the domains of attitudinal and dialogistic meaning-making provides a roadmap on how the different meaning-making options are employed and related to each other to promote common issue that the corona virus pandemic is a threat to humanity regardless of the linguistic or geographical differences. The appraisal framework accordingly makes the present study possible to offer explanations on the evaluative workings of the various individual texts and provide their evaluative arrangements in the meaning-making about the pandemic to lime light. The paper finally offers new insights into how ideologically evaluation of the discourse can help to x-ray the roles of linguistic resources in covid-19 texts regardless of geographical location in encouraging solidarity and awareness against common the challenges of the pandemic and at same time persuading people to take common action against these challenges due the ravaging nature of the pandemic.

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Impositive speech act in assassin's creed: Renaissance

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Abstract

In English, studies on various forms and functions of speech acts have been carried out by some previous researchers. However, specific studies on impositive speech acts are still limited. The purpose of this research was to find out the forms and functions of impositive speech acts that exist in the forms and functions of the directive, assertive, expressive, commissive, and declarative speech act in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance. The researcher used three main theories as indicators of impositive speech acts, namely cost-benefit (Leech), face-threatening act (Levinson), and verb (Lee). To analyse the data, the researcher was assisted by three raters to analyse the impositive speech acts through a focus group discussion. Furthermore, all data will be analyzed through four stages, namely domain analysis, taxonomy, componential, and cultural theme analysis. The results showed that the use of speech acts in directive form was the most widely used. At last, the function of the impositive speech act was to command.

Keywords: impositive; speech act; illocution; utterance; novel

1. Introduction

As part of oral communication, speech acts are always used in everyday conversation. One of the speech acts that are commonly used is the impositive speech act. However, not many people are aware that these impositive utterances burden the hearer or only benefit the speaker. An impositive speech act is an utterance that burdens the hearer to do something or is morally burdened (Leech 1983; Brown and Levinson 1987; Lee 1974). Furthermore, the impositive speech will be seen through power, social distance, and rating of imposition as a redressive action aimed at the speech partner. Related to its use, impositive speech acts are not only found in directive speech acts but also in other speech acts such as assertive, commissive, expressive, and declarative (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989; Haverkate 1984; Leech 1983; Reiter 2000; Trosborg 2004). The other four categories of speech acts are assertive, commissive, expressive, and declarative.

1.1. Literature review

Research related to TTI on several types of speech acts has been investigated by (Haverkate 1984). However, this study only examines the TTI of the three categories of speech acts proposed by Searle

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(1969), namely: directive, assertive, and commissive. Furthermore, there is no explanation of how TTI is associated with the use of politeness according to the speaker's status. Furthermore, the theory of politeness has also been carried out by (Yaqubi, Saeed, and Khaksari 2016; Borovina 2017; Guo 2002; Martínez Flor 2012; 2005). However, they limit their research only to the types of speech acts of inviting, asking, blaming, and advising and have not used literary works as the object of research. Meanwhile, Brown and Levinson (1987) & Lee (1974) show that there are three main characteristics of how TTI is used, namely: the use of the word’s "order", "request" and "equal status" from speakers and speech partners. However, they did not specify how the elements in "ordering" and "asking" were used in terms of the equal status of the speaker and the interlocutor so that the aspect of equality of orders or requests has not yet been explained in detail.

According to experts, TTI itself can be seen from several indicators. The researcher highlights the theory of cost-benefit (Leech, 1983), use of verbs (Lee, 1974), and face-threatening act or abbreviated FTA (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Based on Brown & Levinson (1987) explains that TTI appears as a result of face threats that occur through several motives that burden the relationship between the speaker and the speech partner, namely; (a) the desire to threaten the face of the interlocutor, (b) the desire to make the speech more efficient and show the speech in a state of urgency, and (c) the desire to maintain the speaker's face in front of the speech partner and mitigation only occurs if (b) is greater than (c). Meanwhile, in Leech (1984) it is illustrated by the scale of benefit and cost in an utterance that is seen from the burden and benefit between the speaker and the hearer. For example, you will peel those potatoes which burdens the interlocutor. Furthermore, Lee (1974) gives examples of TTI in verb groups, for example, admonish, advise, appeal, ask, beg, suggest, and submit. Finally, the three indicators in these theories can serve as a reference for identifying the form and function of TTI in this research by involving the context and purpose of using TTI.

Based on previous research, the researcher tried to dig for further information about the impositive speech acts. Apart from being seen from the various forms of speech acts, of course, there will be various functions of each of these speech acts such as commanding, which is a part of the directive speech act, stating is a part of the directive, and refusing is a part of the commissive. The novel chosen for this research is Assassin's Creed: Renaissance written by Oliver Bowden, Christie Golden, Matthew Kirby, and Gordon Doherty. This novel is the first novel in the Assassin's Creed series which tells the story of Ezio Auditore's struggle to take revenge from criminal collusion that sacrificed the lives of his father, brother, and sister.

1.2. Research questions

Based on the preliminary rationale above, this study attempts to reveal and describe the form and function of TTI in the military field in the form of directive, assertive, commissive, expressive, and declarative speech in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance. The details of the problem formulation that have been formulated by researchers are as follows:

1. What is the form and function of TTI in directive, assertive, commissive, expressive, and declarative speech in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance?

2. Method

This research attempts to describe the form and function of impositive speech acts in the novel Assassin's Creed: Reinassance with a pragmatic approach. All data in this research are in the form of speech acts in the form of directive, assertive, commissive, expressive, and declarative speech acts. Furthermore, the function of speech acts is adjusted to the form of the speech such as commanding, stating, and mocking. To obtain a comprehensive understanding of impositive speech acts, the data were analyzed using three speech act theories that have a cost-benefit aspect between speakers and interlocutor (Leech, 1984), which contain groups of verbs with positive power in line with Lee's theory (1984), and speech that arises as a result of face threats that occur through several motives that burden the relationship between the speaker and the speech partner (Brown and Levinson, 1987). In this research, data analysis was carried out by reading, listening, and recording the TTI in the novel Assassin's Creed: Reinassance. The novel has a theme of war that involves many characters in it so that it has the potential to use impositive speech acts (Haverkate 1984; 1990). The steps taken by researchers to get in-depth information from the experts are Focus Group Discussions (FGD). That is done to ensure the validity of the research data.

3. Results

The Results section presents the study's findings. Results should be clear and concise. After the implementation of Focus Group Discussion which involved experts in the field of linguistics, the researchers attempted to describe in detail the forms and functions of impositive speech acts in the directive, assertive and commissive, expressive, and declarative speech in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance. Table 1 shows all forms and functions of impositive speech acts.

Table 1. Forms and functions of impositive speech acts

No	**Form**	**Function**	**Number of data**	**Percentage**
1	Directive	Command	144	34,3%
		Forbid	25	5,9%
		Challenge	1	0,2%
		Request	62	14,7%
		Advise	17	4.05%
		Ask	30	7,14%
		Refuse	1	0,2%
		Begging	2	0,4%
Total			**280**	**66,8 %**
2	Expressive	Criticize	6	1,5%
		Mock	28	6,7%
		Showing anger	28	6,7%
		Accusing	4	0,9%
		Expressing anger	3	0,8%
		Expressing fear	1	0,2%
		Expressing frustration	2	0,4%
		Expressing disappointment	2	0,4%
		Blame	4	0,9%
		Curse	6	1,5%
		Protest	1	0,2%
		Underestimating	3	0,8%
Total			**88**	**21%**
3.	Assertive	Declare:	14	3,34%
Total			**14**	**3,34%**
4.	commissive	Threatening	26	6,3%
		Promise	4	0,9%
		Refuse	4	0,9%
Total			**34**	**8,1%**
	Declarative	Declaration	1	0,23%

5.				
Total			**1**	**0,23%**
TOTAL AMOUNT OF DATA			**419**	**100%**

In the table 1, it can be seen that from 419 data, there are 280 (66, 8%) data belongs to Directive speech acts which consists of eight functions of impositive speech acts, namely, 144 (34.4%) order, 25 (5.9%) forbid, 1 (0.2%) challenge, 62 (14.7%) request, 17 (4.05%) advised, 30 (17.4 %) ask, 1 (0.2%) refuse and 2 (0.4%) begging. Then, Expressive speech acts which totalled 88 (21%) data consisting of twelve functions of impositive speech acts, namely, criticizing 6 (1.5%), mocking 28 (6.7%), showing anger 28 (6.7%), accusing 4 (0.9%), expressing anger 3 (0.8%), expressing fear 1 (0.2%), expressed frustration 2 (0.4%), expressed disappointment 2 (0.2%), blaming 4 (0.9%), cursing 6 (1.5%), protesting 1 (0, 2%) and underestimating 2 (0.8%). Further, the use of Assertive speech act are 14 (3.34%) data which only in the function of stating 14 (3, 34%). Furthermore, the use of Commissive 34 (8.1%) which consists of eight functions of impositive speech acts, namely, threatened 26 (6.3%), promised 4 (0.9%) and refused 4 (0.9%). Finally, the use of Declarative speech act with total only 1(0.2%) data with the function declarative.

The use of the directive speech acts in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance is divided into eight functions, namely, order, forbid, challenge, ask, advise, ask, refuse and plead as described in the following table.

Table 2. Use of the directive speech in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance

No	**Function**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Command	144	34,3%
2	forbid	25	5,9%
3	Challenging	1	0,2%
4	Request for	62	14,7%
5	Advise	17	4.05%
6	Ask	30	7,14%
7	Refuse	1	0,2%
8	Begging	2	0,4%
Total		**280**	**66,8 %**

The table above shows that the use of the *directive* speech act in the commanding function is 144 (34.3%). Next, in the forbid function with totaled 25 (5.9%), challenge 1 (0.2%) and request 62 (14.7%). Furthermore, in the advising function, there are 17 (4.05%), asking 30 (7.14%) and refusing 1 (0.2%). Finally, the request function is 2 (0.4%). The following is a review of functional directive speech according to the number of frequencies.

Example of Directive speech act with the command function

001	
	Silence my friends!

On data 001, ***Silence my friends!*** is a form of *directive* speech acts which has a commanding function. The utterance represents an order from someone who has *power* more than the speech partner. This results in the speech partner being burdened to follow the speaker's orders.

Example of Directive speech acts with the forbidding function

002	
	Enough of your nonsense, grullo

In data 002, **Enough of your nonsense, grullo** is a form of directive speech that has a forbidding function. The utterance represents the forbidding given by speakers who have power over their interlocutors.

Example of Directive speech acts with the challenge function

006	
	Let's see if you fight as well as you gabble!

On data 006, **Let's see if you fight as well as you gabble!** Is a form of directive speech acts that has a challenge function. The utterance represents the challenge of speakers to their interlocutors.

Example of Directive speech act with the request function

018	
	Time to go home, little brother

In data 018, speech Time to go home, little brother is a form of directive speech acts that has a request function. The utterance represents request of speakers to their interlocutors.

Example of Directive speech act with the advising function

016	
	You've made quite a mess of yourself this time, young man. Can't you people think of anything better to do than go around beating each other up?

In data 016, speech ***You've made quite a mess of yourself this time, young man. Can't you people think of anything better to do than go around beating each other up?*** Is a form of directive speech act that has an advising function. The utterance represents the advising given by speakers to their interlocutors.

Example of Directive speech act with ask function

051	
	Have you delivered the documents?

On data 051, speech ***Have you delivered the documents?*** is a form of directive speech that has the function of asking. The utterance represents a question given by the speaker to the speech partner to complete a job.

Example of Directive speech act with the refuse function

097	
	No

On data 097, ***No!*** is a form of directive speech acts that has refuse function. The utterance represents refusement of speakers to their interlocutors.

Example of Directive speech acts with the begging function

389	
	Stop running away, please!

On data 389, speech ***Stop running away, please!*** Is a form of directive speech that has a begging function. The utterance represents the begging of speakers to their interlocutors.

Table 3. Use of the directive speech in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance

No	Function	Frequency	Percentage
1	Criticize	6	1,5%
2	Mock	28	6,7%
3	Showing anger	28	6,7%
4	Accusing	4	0,9%
5	Expressing anger	3	0,8%
6	Expressing fear	1	0,2%
7	Expressing frustration	2	0,4%
8	Expressing disappointment	2	0,4%
9	Blame	4	0,9%
10	Damn	6	1,5%
11	Protest	1	0,2%
12	Underestimating	3	0,8%
Total		280	66,8 %

The table above shows that the use of Expressive speech acts in the criticize function is 6 (1.5%). Next, the mocking function is 28 (6.7%), showing anger 28 (6.7%), accusing 4 (0.9%), expressing anger (0.8), and expressing fear 1 (0.2%). Furthermore, in the functions of expressing frustration 2 (0.4%), expressing disappointment 2 (0.4%), blaming 4 (0.9%), cursing 6 (1.5%), and protesting 1 (0.2 %). Finally, the underestimate function is 3 (0.8%). The following is a review of directive speech act functions according to the number of frequencies.

Examples of expressive speech acts with criticize function

005	
	that's quite enough from you, Ezio, you little prick!

On data 005, ***that's quite enough from you, Ezio, you little prick!*** Is an expressive form of speech that has the function of criticize. The utterance represents the criticize of speakers to their interlocutors.

Examples of expressive speech acts with mocking function

030	
	Is that the best you can do?

On data 030, ***Is that the best you can do?*** Is an expressive speech form that has a mocking function. The utterance represents the mocking from speakers to their interlocutors.

Example of expressive speech acts with showing anger function

040	
	Do you think me blind and deaf, my son?

On data 040, ***Do you think me blind and deaf, my son?*** Is an expressive form of speech that has the function of showing anger. The utterance represents the anger of speakers to their interlocutors.

Examples of expressive speech acts with accusing function

419	
	your kind betrayed us

In data 419, ***your kind betrayed us*** is an expressive form of speech acts that has the function of accusing. The utterance represents the accusement of speakers to their interlocutors.

Forms and functions of impositive in assertive speech acts

The use of the *assertive* speech in the novel *Assassin's Creed: Renaissance* only exists in one function, namely declaring. Further description is given in the following table.

Table 4. Use of the directive speech in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance

No	**Function**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Declare:	14	3,34%
Total		**14**	**3,34 %**

The table above shows that the use of *Expressive* speech in the function is 6 (1.5%). The following is a review of assertive speech acts functional according to the number of frequencies.

Examples of expressive speech acts with criticize function

027	
	I'm not sure you're getting the message

In data 027, ***I'm not sure you're getting the message*** is a form of assertive speech that has the function of stating. The utterance represents a statement from the speaker that burdens the hearer.

Forms and functions of impositive in commissive speech acts.

The use of the *commissive* speech acts in the novel *Assassin's Creed: Renaissance* is divided into three categories, namely; threaten, promise, and refuse. Further description is given in the following table.

Table 5. Use of the directive speech in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance

No	**Function**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Threatening	26	6,3%
2	Promise	4	0,9%
3	Refuse	4	0,9%
Total		34	8,1%

The table above shows that the use of *commissive* speech acts in the threatening function is 6 (1.5%). Next, the promised function is 4 (0.9%) and refusing is 4 (0.9%). The following is a review of functional commissive speech according to the number of frequencies.

Examples of expressive speech acts with threatening function

031	
	Shut your mouth or by God I'll kill you!

In data 031, ***Shut your mouth or by God I'll kill you!*** Is a form of commissive speech that has a threatening function. The utterance represents a threatening from the speaker to the hearer.

Examples of expressive speech acts with promise function

249	
	I will put you on your knees

In data 249, ***I will put you on your Knees*** is a form of commissive speech that has a promise function. The utterance represents a promise from the speaker to the hearer.

Examples of expressive speech with rejection function

102	
	But just now, I cannot stay

In data 102, ***But just now, I cannot stay*** is a form of commissive speech which has the function of rejecting. The utterance represents a rejection from the speaker to the hearer.

Forms and functions of impositive in declarative speech acts

Use of the *declarative* speech in the novel *Assassin's Creed: Renaissance* only exists in one function, namely declaring. Further description is given in the following table.

Table 6. Use of the directive speech in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance

No	**Function**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Declaration	1	0,2%
Total		**1**	**0,2 %**

The table above shows that the use of *Declarative* speech in the declaration function is 6 (1.5%). The following is a review of the declarative utterances.

Example 1

088	
	I hereby sentence you all to death, the sentence to be carried out immediately!

In data 088, ***I hereby sentence you all to death, the sentence to be carried out immediately!*** Is a form of declarative speech that has a declaration function. The utterance represents it.

4. Discussion

This study shows how the concept of impositive speech acts is applied to all forms of speech acts in the novel Assassin's Creed: Renaissance. The research question investigates the form and function of impositive speech acts which are divided into the directive, assertive, commissive, expressive, and declarative speech acts. Furthermore, in the function of the speech acts, the researcher found different functions with the most kinds of functions found in expressive speech acts. Many previous studies have reviewed impositive speech acts which only focused on one form and function of impositive speech acts. Most of these studies discuss impositive speech acts in directive speech only.

The research on impositive speech acts in directive speech acts mostly examines the functions of commanding, requesting, inviting, and how the speech can be refined. Research on impositive speech acts with the function of asking has been carried out by (Borovina, 2017; Lee-Wong, 1994; Pluszczyk, 2017; Martínez Flor, 2012; 2005; Haddad, 2019). This study limits its study to only one function of the impositive speech act which should not be limited to the asking functions on speech acts. In contrast to this study, the researcher tries to find the functions of impositive speech acts that exist in the directive form such as prohibiting, ordering, rejecting which will threaten the interlocutor. Besides, this research also tries to find the function of impositive speech acts in other forms of speech acts such as criticize, mocking, and underestimating in expressive speech acts.

The findings in this research of impositive speech acts are more dominant in the form and function of directive speech acts. It can be seen by the dominance of directive speech acts of 66% with eight functions such as commanding, forbidding, challenging, advising, asking, refusing, and begging. Furthermore, the function of commanding speech acts is mostly found not only in directive speech acts but in the whole function of speech acts. In contrast to previous studies such as Culpeper & Archer (2008) examined the impositive speech acts with the use of indirective speech between speakers in role-playing texts in 1640-1760. This study uses a corpus of data as a research methodology by looking at sociopragmatic records and the function of the social context at that time. The results of the study showed that the text of the drama at that time, of 73% used impositive speech. This research is still studying the utterances of asking and commanding especially by looking at the scale of its indirectness. Not only that, Yaqubi et al., (2016) only examines the impositive speech acts by looking at offering and inviting utterances in 10 Iranian films. This study uses the theory proposed by (Leech, 1983). The result of this research shows that impositive speech in the form of a cost-benefit scale can explain the politeness implicatures that appear in performing speech acts as seen on the directness-indirectness scale. Next, Borovina (2017) examines how Command language learners in Croatia use the impositive speech acts using requesting speech. Data were taken using the Discourse Completion Test (DCT) which contained 10 school-related activities. The results of this research indicate that there is a modification of the use of the impositive in asking speech acts by using the word "please" and the past tense or modals. Not much different from previous research, this impositive speech acts research also only discusses asking speech.

In contrast to previous research, the advantages of this research are the researcher not only looks the impositive speech acts in one form of speech act. Besides, this research seeks into at the various functions of impositive speech acts used in the directive, assertive, expressive, commissive, and declarative speech acts. Overall, this study seeks to see a broader perspective on impositive speech acts using three theories, namely cost-benefit, face-threatening acts, and verbs. The weakness in this research is the difficulty in finding impositive speech acts in declarative speech acts. This happens because directive speech is usually spoken by someone who has the authority or has power over many people. Thus, further researchers can try to find sources of research on declarative speech acts.

5. Conclusions

This research reveals the use of impositive speech acts in all forms of speech acts such as directive, assertive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. By using three theoretical approaches, the researcher found that the most widely used impositive speech acts were directive speech acts with a commanding function. As a novel that has a military theme, Assassin's Creed novels: Renaissance has a lot of utterances that burden the interlocutor such as commanding and condescending. Next, the impositive speech acts occurs because of the difference in power between speakers. Impositive speech is usually done by speakers who have more power over the interlocutor. Conversely, if the speaker has lower power than the speech partner, then the speaker usually tries to refine the speech. Not only power, social distance between speakers and interlocutors can also lead to impositive speech acts. For example, a general can give orders to his troops to do so. Finally, affect distance or emotional closeness between the speaker and the hearer can occur because of the distance between them. Thus, this research can provide knowledge to speakers to be more careful about the speech used, especially regarding impositive speech acts. In everyday communication, we can smooth out impositive speech so as not to burden the interlocutor.

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English language students' perspectives on the difficulties in translation: Implications for language education

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Abstract

This study investigates the difficulties in translation and factors influencing the translating process from foreign language students' perspectives at a private university. This work also aims to find out the reasons why foreign language students encounter the difficulties in the process and learn about the different ways in which students majoring in English translate a text into their first language of Vietnamese. Using the mixed method (quantitative and qualitative), the study analysis is based on descriptive statistics using SPSS programme and individual interview results. The results showed that salient findings emerged from the data concerning the relationships between four factors namely *lexis, grammar, culture,* and *existing knowledge* under student's viewpoints. Those elements affected students hierarchically in their process of translation, in which *lexis* was the most difficult factor while *grammar* seemed to be less remarkable. Therefore, based on the findings, it is suggested to adjust, modify, and select appropriate translation materials in the curricula in higher education to well equip students with those elements to compete in the translation industry.

Keywords: translation; language student; difficulties; perspectives; factors

1. Introduction

Since the advent of translation, people have high expectations for positive interaction between different languages. For that reason, translation has always been an area that focuses on developing in education in general, and other fields in particular.

Vietnamese and English are languages from the Eastern and the Western, so there are many differences in their structures of grammar, vocabulary, and culture. These factors in general might affect students' translation ability. Thus, the concern is that students would encounter some difficulties to have a good translation. Larson (1998) noted that in a good translation, meaning is key when translators use any techniques to translate a text from one to another language. The importance of translation has always been manifesting through each stage of civilized development, however, there are still certain obstacles for students to approach this subject and to an extent those difficulties affect students' translation performance.

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1.1. Literature review

1.1.1 Definition of translation

The term *translation* is a broad category and defined differently according to academic fields. Bell (1991) described translation as a process of transferring meaning between two languages, and it is also preserving semantic equivalencies. In addition, translation is the replacing of a document's presentation in a target language shows its equivalence with a source language.

In the book "A textbook of translation", a language could be rendered persistently according to the author's perspectives when translating a word into another language (Peter, 1998). Hartmann & Stork (1972) had some points in common with Peter (1988) when they stated that the consequence of converting a material text from one language into another constitutes a translation.

Nida (1991) stated that translation is as the procedure of selecting words for a target language to meet the closet natural equivalent meanings of a source language while Conway (2012) defined translation is as a competitive concept between two main academic disciplines including anthropology/ethnography and cultural/postcolonial studies. It showed differences in cultural formats as explained by people in different cultures and by movement (asylum, political migration). Also, it represented the integration of the language in the fields of information, knowledge, and others. Additionally, Larson (1998) indicated that the term is the structural component of language which is literally seen in print or heard in speech.

1.1.2 Influence of lexis (vocabulary)

Vocabulary constitutes to create opportunities for students in learning translation subjects and translating texts well. Arono & Nadrah (2019) supported that most students have faced difficulties in the translation process due to the lack of vocabulary.

Most English words have many meanings, so the exact meaning of a word can be appropriately expressed only in a particular context. Therefore, translators have to be aware of the meaning of words in different situations (Larson ,1998).

1.1.3 Influence of grammar

English and Vietnamese indeed have considerable differences in grammatical structures, vocabulary, and cultures. Tichelaar (2002) explained that English belongs to the Germanic language family while Vietnamese belongs to the Austro-Asiatic language family. These two languages are inherently different in characteristics leading to the differences in words and grammar.

If compared to other languages, English goes by very tightly bound within the sentence structures while Vietnamese language is much more flexible by the way it does not always use articles. Baker (2018) revealed that an incorrect grammatical structure is not acceptable in most contexts, especially in translation, so it forces the translator to follow a certain process.

1.1.4 Influence of culture

Culture is considered difficult for translators, so to overcome linguistic barriers when they translate a text, they need to deal with cultural barriers (Komissarov, 1991). Larson (1998) detailed that a word or a phrase that has a constructive connotation in one culture may have a destructive implication in another.

Additionally, it is indicated that what is considered related to translation is evenly difficult to convert with any accuracy (Burke & Hsia, 2007). Nida (1991) analysed deeply the cause of cultural formation, and at the same time made an objective comment regarding the translators' styles while Peter (1988) noted that the difficulties involved using obscure terms where a literal translation would distort meanings.

1.1.5 Influence of existing knowledge

A professional translator ensures that there are enough necessary skills, so translators need the complete knowledge that original sentences in the text should be always judged in the context of their societies (Asad, 1986). Gerding-Salas (2000) emphasized that translator knowledge covering a deep cultural scope is the key to becoming a professional translator.

However, understanding too much of the subject matter also can lead to difficulties for the translators. As a matter of fact, translators lack the inefficiency for imagination which leads to common translating over the heads because they unconsciously assume the audiences know all what they translate (Nida, 1991).

1.2. Research questions

The following questions will be answered in this study:

1. What are the most and the least difficult factors affecting students' translating process?
2. To what extent do English-majored students perceive the difficulties in translation?

2. Method

2.1. Sample/Participants

The number of participants is 125 English-majored students at a private university in Vietnam. There would not be a selection based on age or gender. At the time of conducting the questionnaire, all of the students had finished their translation courses. Their translation skills were graded at the intermediate level with translated texts of various fields namely culture, tourism, education, technology, medical, and so forth. The participants for interviews included in the research were 16 students out of 125, who represented the highest and lowest mean scores for each factor out of four factors namely lexis, grammar, culture, and existing knowledge.

2.2. Instrument(s)

To provide a complete understanding of the research problems and address the research questions, the researchers used a descriptive study mixing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Particularly, the instruments included a 5-point-Likert-scale questionnaire and individual interviews. The data gathered were used to utilize levels of difficulty in translation, its relations, and continuum between four factors that contribute to the measures of finding solutions.

The quantitative method was conducted through structured questions with 16 items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = extremely easy, 2 = easy, 3 = neutral, 4 = difficult, 5 = extremely difficult) to find out students' perspectives on the difficulties in translation. Sixteen items were categorized into four domains namely *lexis, grammar, culture*, and *existing knowledge*. The questionnaire was adapted and modified from Arono & Nadrah (2019). The Cronbach's Alpha value of the questionnaire (α = .864) was considered reliable.

The qualitative method was of individual interviews. The interviewees were asked 18 sets of questions related to the questionnaire.

2.3. Data collection procedures and data analysis

The questionnaire was utilised on the platform of Google Form and written in Vietnamese language in order to avoid misunderstandings because the participants are all Vietnamese.

Sixteen participants who perceived the highest and lowest in the mean scores according to the total results attended the interviews in order to figure out the reasons why English-majored students perceived the difficulties in translation courses at different levels. Face-to-face interviews were carried out at the arranged time with participants. The interviews were recorded, then transcribed and translated into English language. The data of interviews were interpreted and analysed by using a manual coding system.

The data were analysed by the (IBM) SPSS Statistics version 20 software. Descriptive tests were used to find out the frequency and level of difficulties from student's perspectives.

3. Results

3.1 Results collected from the questionnaire

A descriptive test was used to analysed the general description of difficulty level students perceived

.

Table 1. Mean scores of participants' perspectives on difficulties in translation

Domains	N	Min.	Max.	Mean (M)	SD
Lexis	125	2.00	5.00	3.94	.58
Grammar	125	1.00	5.00	2.89	.79
Culture	125	1.00	5.00	3.64	.80
Existing knowledge	125	1.75	5.00	3.82	.73
General Mean	125	1.63	4.75	3.57	.53

As shown in Table 1, the overall mean score of the participants performed in the questionnaire presented was at a high level (M = 3.57). The computed mean score was significantly higher than the average mean of the 5-point Likert scale (M = 3.00). The result indicated that participants' perspectives of translation was nearly at a difficult level. The results were in line with the findings of Arono & Nadrah (2019). The level of difficulty could be arranged as follows: lexis (M = 3.94), existing knowledge (M = 3.82), culture (M = 3.64), and grammar (M = 2.89).

3.1.1 Lexical analysis

Table 2. Mean score of participants' perspectives on lexical difficulties in translation

Categories	N	Min.	Max.	Mean (M)	SD
Technical terms	125	2.00	5.00	4.09	.81
Idioms and proverbs	125	2.00	5.00	3.96	.79
Metaphors and metonymies	125	1.00	5.00	4.00	.85
Ancient to modern words/phrases	125	2.00	5.00	3.71	.93
General Mean	125	2.00	5.00	3.94	.58

Table 2 shows that the overall mean score of the participants performed in the questionnaire presented was at a high level (M = 3.94). The computed mean score was significantly higher than the average mean of the 5-point Likert scale (M = 3.00), which meant vocabulary was graded at a difficult level. The results were in line with the findings of Arono & Nadrah (2019) related to vocabulary factor in translation. The level of difficulty could be arranged as follows: non-specialized stems (M = 4.09), conveying words, phrases using metaphors and metonymies from the original text to the translated text (M = 4.00), transmitting idioms, proverbs from the original text to the translated text (M = 3.96), translating words and phrases from ancient to modern styles (M = 3.71).

3.1.2 Grammar analysis

Table 3. Mean score of participants' perspectives on grammar difficulties in translation

Categories	N	Min.	Max.	Mean (M)	SD
Subject-verb agreement	125	1.00	5.00	3.02	.88
Syntax	125	1.00	5.00	3.02	.90
Articles	125	1.00	5.00	2.98	1.00
Singular/plural Countable/uncountable nouns	125	1.00	5.00	2.57	1.06
General Mean	125	1.00	5.00	2.89	.79

As can be seen in Table 3, the overall mean score of the participants performed in the questionnaire presented in the table was at a low level (M = 2.89). The computed mean score was not significantly lower than the average mean of the 5-point Likert scale (M = 3.0). The results were in line with the findings of Arono & Nadrah (2019). They believed that the participants got some problems in translation because of grammatical factors, but grammar was considered a relatively easy for them. The level of difficulty could be arranged as follows: subject-verb agreement and tenses (M = 3.02), article (M = 2.98), and countable, uncountable nouns; singular and plural nouns (M = 2.57).

3.1.3 Culture analysis

Table 4. Mean score of participants' perspectives on cultural difficulties in translation

Categories	N	Min.	Max.	Mean (M)	SD
Local culture	125	1.00	5.00	3.50	.90
Regional culture	125	1.00	5.00	3.70	.89
National culture	125	1.00	5.00	3.66	1.0
International culture	125	1.00	5.00	3.71	1.0
General Mean	125	1.00	5.00	3.64	.80

As can be noticed, the overall mean score of the participants performed in the domain presented in Table 4 was at a high level (M = 3.64). In other words, participants found culture was nearly difficult. The computed mean score was significantly higher than the average mean of the 5-point Likert scale (M = 3.00). The level of difficulty could be arranged from the highest to the lowest as follows:

international element (M = 3.71), regional element (M = 3.70), national element (M= 3.66), and local element (M= 3.50).

3.1.4 Existing knowledge factor analysis

Table 5. Mean score of participants' perspectives on existing knowledge difficulties in translation

Categories	N	Min.	Max.	Mean (M)	SD
Broad knowledge	125	2.00	5.00	4.06	.90
Social knowledge	125	2.00	5.00	3.78	.94
Interdisciplinary knowledge	125	1.00	5.00	3.92	.97
Scientific knowledge	125	1.00	5.00	3.55	1.01
General Mean	125	1.75	5.00	3.82	.73

The questionnaire presented on the existing knowledge factor was at a nearly high level (M = 3.82). The computed mean score was notably higher than the average mean of the 5-point Likert scale (M = 3.0). As in Table 5, the maximum mean value of 4.06 states that out of 125 respondents who felt quite difficult when accessing and translating texts that required a deep and broad knowledge of a culture or multi-culture that slightly higher mean scores than the other domains. The results were in line with the findings of the researchers. The level of difficulty could be arranged as follows: cultural or multicultural knowledge (M = 4.06), social knowledge (M = 3.78), scientific knowledge (M = 3.92), and interdisciplinary knowledge (M = 3.55).

3.2 Results collected from the interview questions

With the desire to make the study more reliable, the researchers interviewed and recorded sixteen participants. The interviews revealed that all interviewees (100%) agreed that translation plays an important role in English- majored students. Over half of the interviewees agreed that translation was difficult to translate. However, some interviewees said that translation was not quite difficult because of supportive tools. The only student P said that translation was not difficult.

Besides, to create a perfect translation, *lexis* and *grammar* constituted a good translation as many of the participants confirmed. To improve these difficulties in translating, the students also had some ways depending on different conditions and specifications in their learning context. There were 6 participants looking up on Google Translate and dictionary. While others said that they needed to improve more vocabulary while the other participants gave the different solution that the translators needed to prepare difficult words in advance or kept the words and explained details. Therefore, participants did not share the same opinion about solutions.

In the interviewing process, when interviewees were asked among the four elements *grammar*, *vocabulary, culture,* and *existing knowledge*, which one played the most important role in performing a perfect translation. The data revealed that many of the interviewees of the total said that vocabulary was the most important as stated.

"Translators with a rich source of vocabulary will be able to access and translate easier with the source text. Without vocabulary, it is impossible to finish a text or a task. A good piece of translation depends most on the meanings for words." (Participant C)

Moreover, most of the participants acknowledged that they lacked vocabulary about specialized words related to politics, medical care, or health that made them feel difficult in the translation process. However, the participants also shared some solutions to improve these difficulties such as using a dictionary, learning new words online, using Google Translate, studying on trusted sources (BBC, or VOA). The most effective way that most students chose to solve their difficulties was to read more translated articles like newspapers, magazines, and books.

"I can learn vocabulary on the Internet such as video clips on YouTube. Sometimes, Google Translate can help. Reading more English newspapers can increase number of specialized vocabulary words as BBC news." (Participant N).

Except for lexis, the results revealed that most interviewees agreed they regularly had difficulties in grammar, but many of them supported that the grammar was not a big problem as they can ask for help from grammar checking tools.

"Grammar is also a factor affecting translation, but I can handle these grammatical errors thanks to Grammarly or Google Translate. Checking grammar after translation can help improve my accuracy next time, so I rarely make grammatical mistakes then." (Participant D)

More interestingly, based on the analysis of the interview data, it is explicit that cultural translation is one of the factors that strongly impacts the student translating process. It relies profoundly on translators' understanding of the various cultures of different countries. Especially, without the support of translation tools, it becomes even more challenging to approach culture through translation. When being asked queries associated with cultural elements, the interviewees had numerous similarities in their answers, thereby showing that cultural factors actually affected their learning process of translation. They also gave some suggestions for improvement as getting more exposure to cultural aspects from various sources on the Internet or books before translating a text.

"Having not been exposed to a certain culture, I can only understand its cultural words to a certain extent, it is not completely accurate in comparison with the meaning that the original text is aiming at. I think it is important to get more knowledge about the cultures in which the text is involved by reading books about cultures or do some search online." (Participant J)

Existing knowledge is the factor that most participants encountered during their translating process. They reported that some scientific and specialized fields required much knowledge to understand before translating a text. Although vocabulary and grammar were not a big problem, the participants also felt very challenging to have a good translation in a field of study that they were not familiar with. Some participants suggested that they needed more reading comprehension or support from experts from those specialized fields.

"Before translating a scientific text, it is stressful because more time and searching are required to understand some technical terms or language use so that a good translation can be processed. Sometimes, asking for support from some experts or lecturers is a good idea, but self-searching and learning by self is faster. (Participants E and G)

More importantly, participants all agreed that four factors (grammar, vocabulary, culture, and existing knowledge) were essential in their translating process if they wanted to become a professional translator. Many of them thought that a good translation was impossible to be made if one factor was missed. Therefore, the only way to become an expert in translation was to improve their competency in many fields as well as their language skills.

"I'd say that all those factors are important for me to become a master in translation industry. It takes a long time to learn many skills and get knowledge about many areas so that I can translate accurate information as required in a test or in my future work. (Participant M)

4. Discussion

The findings from the questionnaire and data analysis focused mainly on four factors namely lexis, grammar, culture, and background knowledge. Firstly, it can be seen from the findings that the difficulty in lexis was rated high, which was considered the most difficult factor in translation such as specialized terms; idioms and proverbs; metaphors and metonymies; ancient words, were also scored high index when they were analysed individually. According to the analysis results, the terminology was the leading factor making it difficult for students to translate, which was similar to the results from Arono & Nadrah (2019). The following were idioms and proverbs. This result was in accordance with the study in the book of Baker (2018) when he analysed that student had the most difficulty translating specialized words, followed by idioms and proverbs.

The second most difficult factor was existing knowledge as specified social knowledge, scientific knowledge, and interdisciplinary knowledge. The result was in line with Asad (1986), which pointed out a target text should be judged correctly in the social context and culture. Additionally, the second remarkable aspect of the existing knowledge factor was scientific knowledge that was similar to Montgomery (2010).

The third most influential factor after the analysis was culture-related, which was accorded with Komissarov (1991) and Larson (1998). Specifically, the international culture accounted for the highest difficulty standard since international culture was quite extraneous and difficult to access if they did not have enough cultural knowledge. Another point worth mentioning was regional knowledge. Therefore, the research results showed that regional elements had a significant influence. Besides, the factors of local culture and national culture were also influential. The result was similarly discussed by Burke & Hsia (2007) in the book "Cultural translation in early modern Europe".

As for grammar, students generally felt quite confident because they had a solid foundation in grammar during their access to English. The mean score of grammar reached M = 2.89, which was still at the easy level (near average). However, there were still a few participants mentioning some grammar points such as run-on sentences, plural and singular verbs, type 3 of conditional sentences, misconception of past simple and present perfect, which made it difficult for them to translate a document.

In addition to the difficulties that students encountered in translation, they also offered solutions to improve those difficulties themselves including using Google Translate and dictionaries, studying on YouTube, reading more articles, newspapers, books, learning on Quizlet. However, most students relied on Google (80%) and technology (applications check grammar and vocabulary) that is also the main reason causing difficulties for students when translating because, without the help of the translation tools, over 90% of interviewees cannot translate correctly the text. Based on the result of the interviews, students showed some elements that translators needed to equip in translation work. Besides, the results also illustrated that there was a relationship between four factors that influenced students' performance in translating. Furthermore, they supported that mistranslation of a factor (grammar, lexis, culture, or existing knowledge) in the translation might lead to the errors of the rest. The reasons were shared by most students that a good translation needed a harmonious combination of four factors.

5. Conclusions

Analytical results of both questionnaires and interviews are compatible. It is clear that translation is a difficult course faced by the students of English-majored students in university. The results showed that the level of difficulty was hierarchical as *lexis, existing knowledge, culture* and *grammar*.

Specifically, *lexis* was the most difficult factor and *grammar* seemed to be less difficult to students in doing translation courses. Lack of vocabulary caused student's failure in their translating process. In addition, students were also influenced by terminologies (political or medical terms) and idioms that caused their translation to become rough and not accurate as required. Furthermore, poor existing knowledge about various fields resulted in mistranslation or misunderstanding the original texts. Therefore, it is suggested to improve students' vocabulary range as well as existing or cultural knowledge to perform the highest-quality translation. More importantly, it is also an implication for language educators and translators to select appropriate teaching and learning materials along with the curricula in higher education in order to assist students in the translation industry.

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Are they really anxious? A critical issue of speaking anxiety in the English thesis defence examinations

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Abstract

Anxiety in spoken English is a common topic in ELT research. However, little is discussed in the literature regarding anxiety in English public speaking particularly in a very awaited yet the most thrilling event called a Thesis Defence Examination (TDE). Therefore, this study aims at investigating postgraduate students' anxiety in facing TDE at the end of their study program at the Postgraduate Program of English Education, Syiah Kuala University, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Conducting quantitative research, we distributed questionnaires to 23 students who have undertaken TDE at the postgraduate program in the odd and even semesters of one academic year. The questionnaires were adapted from the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) by McCroskey (2013). The results of the analysis indicate three big topics that we have discussed thoroughly in this paper; these are anticipatory anxiety, physiological symptoms and lack of control during speech performance. Students are less anxious when they are in total control and understanding of their own data before giving a thesis presentation. They are not concerned about the uncertainty aspects that will occur during the performance nor did they feel worry about what they ought to anticipate. The palpitation of heart-race might be the most pronounce physiological response over the mental disturbance. Meanwhile, cognitive-declined, behavioural avoidance, and psychological dimension of fear can transpire from the result of lack of control during speech performance.

Keywords: anxiety; English language; public speaking; postgraduate students; thesis defence examination

1. Introduction

Anxiety is commonly experienced by people in their daily life. In medical field, anxiety is defined as a feeling or a reaction to a stressor that someone shows through his/her psychological and physiological behaviour (Himanshu, Dharmila, Sarkar & Nutan, 2020). Anxiety appears when someone's fear arises due to a stressful situation that is hard for him/her to face, for example, a mother is anxious when her child has an accident, an employee feels anxious when he has to complete many works within a limited time, and a student experiences anxiety to face an examination. From these examples, we notice that anxiety occurs in different contexts or fields of life. In our study, we focus on the anxiety that appears among the English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners.

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Anxiety in learning EFL is always experienced by EFL students of all education levels. This anxious feeling usually appears when the students are required to use the language to communicate to each other, either in an oral or a written form. They are generally afraid of making mistakes and receiving negative feedbacks or comments from their peers, teachers or interlocutors. This feeling has somehow decreased their motivation to keep using English as a foreign language in communication, either inside or outside the classrooms. Regarding this matter, English teachers have an important role to maintain students' eargerness to learn and use the language. They can firstly map the students' anxiety based on the language skills used in different communicative events. In written communicative events, students may have to write different types of texts in English, as well as to understand different types of texts they read. Meanwhile, in oral ones, they may have to perform a speech as one example of oral communicative events, or interpret a speech that they listen to. EFL students need to have English knowledge and skills, and strategies to achieve the goal of these communicable and informative events (Usman et al., 2018). Therefore, English teachers are suggested to explore the communicative events that increase students' anxiety when they have to perform, before finding out the sources of the anxiety.

In our study, we focused on an oral communicative event called Thesis Defence Examination (TDE). At the Postgraduate English Education Department of Syiah Kuala University, this examination is conducted using English as the medium of communication. As EFL learners, making sure to fulfill the examiners' expectation and pass the examination by using English is considered challenging for the students. There should be some limitations that they commonly have to face when they are defending their argument in English. This condition can surely increase their anxiety and suddenly stop them from speaking English. A prevention for this condition is important to do. Therefore, in our research, we explore the anxiety experienced by the Postgraduate English Education students who have passed the TDE. It is very critical to see if the students are really anxious in this final examination or not.

Studies on anxiety in the field of language learning have been very much conducted by scholars, focusing on different language skills, for example in reading skill (e.g. Huang, 2012; Zhao, 2009) and in writing skill (e.g. Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999). Meanwhile, more previous studies concentrated on the skill of speaking other than the other skills. More scholars in this area centralized their investigation on the sources or causes of EFL speaking anxiety (e.g. Ahmed, Pathan & Khan, 2017; Akkakoson, 2016; Ansari, 2015; Melouah, 2013; Mukminin, et al., 2015; Wang & Roopchund, 2015; Woodrow, 2006; Yahya, 2013). Some scholars aimed their attention at the level of speaking anxiety among EFL students (e.g. Erdiana et al., 2020; Melouah, 2013; Wang & Roopchund, 2015). Moreover, classrooms interventions were also conducted by previous studies to decrease EFL learners' speaking anxiety and the same time increase their performance (e.g. Barrett, Sonderegger & Sonderegger, 2001; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). The relationship between EFL speaking anxiety and speaking performance also became the topic of exploration (Ansari, 2015; Woodrow, 2006). In addition, Pappamihiel (2002) found out the types of speaking anxiety amid EFL students. There are many aspects of speaking anxiety have been explored by researchers previously focusing on different oral communicative events; however, little is discussed in the literature regarding anxiety in English public speaking particularly in a very awaited yet the most thrilling event called a Thesis Defence Examination. Thus, the purpose of our study is to investigate the extent to which the students studying at the Postgraduate Program of English Education of Syiah Kuala University experienced anxiety in the TDE.

1.1. Literature review

1.1.1 English Public Speaking

Public speaking is an oral presentation in a form of speech with a particular topic (Nikitina, 2011) that someone presents to public for academic, business and other purposes. In public speaking, someone shares ideas to others using "logical and organized language" (Li, Gao & Zhang, 2015, p. 53). Here we can see the importance of language in a public speaking, especiallythe international languages including English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Chinese to speak in an international forum or in an event that uses the international languages. In this paper, we talk about English language used in a public speaking. English language plays a critical increased role from year to year in all sectors of life; and the needs to perform good English public speaking skills has rapidly grown (Zhang & Ardasheva, 2019), particularly among ESL and EFL students (Zhou & Veloo, 2020; Zhang, Ardasheva & Austin, 2020). Being able to speak and deliver oral presentation is a crucial skill to share information to, persuade, and entertain audience. On the top of that, some schools across the globe such as schools in the UK have even included oracy (spoken language skills) alongside literacy and numeracy. Despite its importance, however, English public speaking has become the most worrisome performance someone has to do in front of people (Amoah & Yeboah, 2021); and this situation specifically occurs among EFL and ESL students because they are afraid of making errors (Ananda, Fitriani & Samad, 2020; Aziz, Fitriani & Amalina, 2020) in the English language. At university level, the English public speaking that university students need to perform includes for example an individual oral presentation on a certain topic related to the subject being enrolled, and also an oral presentation in Thesis Defence Examination (Li, Gao & Zhang, 2016). For the Thesis Defence Examination, the anxiety level to perform for this event is even more higher, exclusively for those whose English is not their first language; because performing in this event is not only to pass, but also to graduate from their study program.

1.1.2 Thesis Defence Examination

Thesis Defence Examination (TDE) is a final examination which is undertaken by university students orally at the end of their study program to present their research results and to defense their knowledge in front of a board of examiner (Samad & Adnan, 2017, 2018). The terms used for this final examination are varied in different universities across the globe, for example, an institutionalized pedagogical activity is the term employed by the universities in the United States (Hasan, 1994). Meanwhile, in most European countries, this examination is called a public defence; while in the United Kingdom, the common name is viva voce (Samad et al., 2019). Within Indonesian context, different terms are used depending on the degree that the students are pursuing. For the bachelor's degree, a script defence examination is commonly used; while for the master's and doctorate's degrees, the terms are respectively named as Thesis Defence Examination and Dissertation Defence Examination.

This final, awaited, yet thrilling examination is a systematic one; meaning that it has some elements that are interrelated to each other. The elements include the purpose of the exam, the rhetorical steps, the members, the terms used, and the criteria of assessment (Swales, 1990, 2004). The examination aims at assessing students regarding their research knowledge and other related knowledge that they have already obtained from the study program by passing some steps from the introduction to the closing step. Some members with some roles are also involved in this exam, for example, the examiners are assigned to ask questions and provide suggestions, and an examinee is defending his/her research results and arguments. Some other potential members include a chairman and audiences. All of the members are using specific terminologies in the examination; and the examiners have some criteria to assess the examinee and decide whether the examinee can pass the examination or not.

Some examinees may have been familiar with this examination system, while some others may not; and this has raised the anxiety issue among the students.

1.1.3 Speaking Anxiety Measurement

Since decades, scholars on language anxiety have developed tools to measure language learners' anxiety levels and the causes that stimulate anxiety. In 1985, Krashen created the Affective Filter Hypothesis and argued that the variables of affective take part in the process of acquiring second language. An affective filter is formed in a language learner's mind when the anxiety level is high and this filter blocks him/her from acquiring the language which can ne caused by environmental factors, for example, being corrected while making errors so as to feel ambarrassed among peers. With the Affective Filter Hypothesis, language teachers are able to map the students' anxiety level and try to lower their students' affective filter for a better learning environment and an improved language performance. Thenceforth, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) designed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) consisting of thirty-three items to figure out foreign language students' level of anxiety and how this affects them in learning the language. They also classified the sources of anxiety that they divided into three varieties; these include communicative apprehension, negative evaluation, and test anxiety. The identification of students' level of anxiety and sources of anxiety in learning the second or foreign language by the language teachers using FLCAS is hoped to help the students perform better in the classrooms. Moving to the 1990's, Oxford (1999) researched the categories of language anxiety, the factors that correspond to anxiety, as well as the sources of anxiety. Similarly to Krashen (1985) and Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), the tool developed by Oxford (1999) is also aimed at examining the phenomenon of language learning anxiety so as to find the ways for the language students to decrease their anxiety level and improve their language performance.

Another tool for anxiety measurement is called Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) by McCroskey (2013). There are thirty-four items created in the PRPSA form that are scaled from 1 to 5 respectively indicating strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. We chose this measurement for our study to investigate our student-respondents' speaking anxiety because PRPSA is still an up-to-date measurement based on the year of publication, and the items included in the assessment are specifically focusing on the anxiety in public speaking. Since TDE is a presentation that our respondents did in public and were observed by audiences, therefore, TDE is regarded as a public speaking as well. Thus, the use of PRPSA by McCroskey (2013) in our study is appropriate. From the thirty-four statements in PRPSA, we divided them into three big themes. We name the first theme as "anticipatory anxiety: it is a fight or flight situation" which involve statements number 1, 5, 8, 15, 21, 23, 28, 31 and 33. This theme is related to the respondents' level of anxiety when they are thinking about a future situation they might face in TDE. The second theme is "physiological symptoms: is it only in your head" presented by the items number 2, 9, 10, 14, 19, 20, 22, 25, and 32. For this theme, we reviewed if the respondents' physiological symptoms are related to the speaking anxiety occuring in the TDE which is characterized by their body responses. The last theme, "lack of control during speech performance", investigated the respondents' anxiety control occuring during the presentation in the TDE. This investigation is reflected in the statements number 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, and 34. In this paper, the presentation of the respondents' anxiety in TDE is based on these three themes.

1.2. Research question

Based on the objective of our research that we have described previously in this paper, we created a research question for our research as follows: "To what extent do the postgraduate students of the

English Education of Syiah Kuala University experience anxiety in a public speaking called Thesis Defence Examination?

2. Method

This study employed a descriptive quantitative method in conducting the research, and used questionnaire as the data collection technique. The questionnaire was distributed to the research participants as an intention to describe the actual condition (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) of our participants' speaking anxiety in the Thesis Defence Examination event. This research was conducted at the Postgraduate Program of English Education of Syiah Kuala University which is located in Banda Aceh, the capital city of Aceh Province, Indonesia. To select the respondents for our research, we considered non-probability sampling and chose purposive sampling technique that can also be used for quantitative research (Tongco, 2007). The criteria for choosing the respondents were set. First, the respondents are the students of the program who are already in the fourth semester and above of their study time. Second, they already passed all the core and optional subjects. Third, the students have conducted their own research and have completed writing their thesis. Finally, they have undertaken the Thesis Defence Examination. The criteria are set so because the students have currently faced the TDE and they can feel whether they were really anxious or not before, during and after the event; and we believe that the items of the questionnaire that they filled could reveal the level of their anxiety. After talking to the administrative staff of the study program, we eventually had 23 out of 40 students to be the respondents of our research. We noticed that there were 40 students of the study program who have completed writing their thesis; however, only 23 (57%) students already passed the TDE.

The research instrument that we used in gathering the data is questionnaire forms. The forms consist of 34 statements adapted from the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) by McCroskey (2013). We specifically change the word "public speaking" in the questionnaire with the word "Thesis Defence Examination" to lead the respondents' thought directly to TDE. The items are scaled ranging from 1 to 5 that respectively refers to strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The questionnaires filled by the students were analyzed following the steps of analysis suggested by McCroskey (2013) in PRPSA. The first step is adding the scores of items number 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34. The second one is adding the scores of the items number 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 24, and 26. After completing steps 1 and 2, we moved to step 3 by calculating the scores based on the following formula:

$$\text{PRPSA} = 72 - \text{total from step 2} + \text{total from step 1}$$

3. Results

In this section we present the results of the analysis of the questionnaires filled by the students as the respondents of this study. The presentation of the results is divided into three themes based on the 34 statements in the forms. The first theme is "anticipatory anxiety: it is a fight or flight situation" that includes the statements number 1, 5, 8, 15, 21, 23, 28, 31 and 33. For the second theme, we name it "physiological symptoms: is it only in your head?" to present the statements number 2, 9, 10, 14, 19, 20, 22, 25, and 32. The last one, which is "lack of control during speech performance", describes the statements number 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, and 34.

3.1. Anticipatory Anxiety: It Is A Fight or Flight Situation

This section presents the responses from the first domain of the questionnaire regarding an increased level of anxiety by thinking about a situation in the future. The object of this analysis was to find out whether or not the students experience anxiety before performing the Thesis Defence

Examination (TDE) which in turn might shade some light into a rationale explanation as to why it has happened.

The results of the questionnaire indicate that the respondents do experience anxiety while preparing for their TDE presentation. It shows 57% of them agreed that they feel tense and nervous before giving the presentation (#1). Rather than the notion of the presentation itself (#15), they were more anxious about the idea of waiting to give the presentation (#33). Around 39% of the respondents agree that the prospect of waiting right before the performance is much scarier than giving a thesis presentation itself (52%) in which they did with confidence. In their opinion (#21), sitting in the room just before the thesis presentation starts fueling a considerate amount of nervousness (48%). Additionally, being aware that only a little time remains during the thesis presentation may also cause some distress (23#), as it makes them feel very tense and anxious (43%).

Table 1.1. The Percentage Answers of Structured Questionnaire

No.	Statement	Disagreement (%)		Neutral (%)	Agreement (%)	
		SD	D		A	SA
1	While preparing for giving a presentation in thesis examination, I feel tense and nervous.	-	3 (13.04%)	7 (30.43%)	11 (47.82%)	2 (8.69%)
5	I get anxious when I think about a thesis presentation and questions/comments coming up.	4 (17.39%)	6 (26.08%)	6 (26.08%)	6 (26.08%)	1 (4.34%)
8	I look forward to giving a thesis presentation.	-	-	4 (17.39%)	14 (60.89%)	5 (21.73%)
15	I face the prospect of giving a thesis presentation with confidence.	-	5 (21.73%)	6 (26.08%)	7 (30.43%)	5 (21.73%)
21	I experience considerable anxiety while sitting in the room just before my thesis presentation starts.	1 (4.34%)	6 (26.08%)	5 (21.73%)	9 (39.13%)	2 (8.69%)
23	Realizing that only a little time remains in a thesis presentation makes me very tense and anxious.	1 (4.34%)	5 (21.73%)	7 (30.43%)	9 (39.13%)	1 (4.34%)
28	I feel anxious when the department announces the date of a thesis presentation.	3 (13.04%)	11 (47.82%)	3 (13.04%)	6 (26.08%)	-
31	I have trouble falling asleep the night before a thesis presentation.	7 (30.43%)	7 (30.43%)	6 (26.08%)	2 (8.69%)	1 (4.34%)
33	I feel anxious while waiting to give my thesis presentation.	1 (4.34%)	5 (21.73%)	8 (34.78%)	9 (39.13%)	-

* Strongly Disagree = SD, disagree = D, Neutral = N, agree = A, Strongly Agree = SA, MD = Median, MO = Mode, Range/Item = 4.

In the context of something akin to excitement of a future event, the majority of them agree (82%) that the TDE is something to look forward to (#8). It is not something that might affect their night rest because of how anxious they are for tomorrow (#31). More than half of the respondents (61%) state that is was something that might result in sleep disturbance. Same can be said concerning all of the hassle around their research topic (#5) saying that the possible questions and comments proposed by the examiners do not make them worry (43%). Within the same context of anticipation, the students do not feel anxious when the department announces the date of a thesis presentation (61%) (#28).

3.2. Physiological Symptoms: Is It Only in Your Head?

The second domain of the questionnaire intends to observe whether there was the relationship between the physiological symptoms and the anxiety that occur during the Thesis Defence Examination. In addition to that, the most pronounced body responses the students experience will be distinguished.

The report from the respondents' questionnaires stated that most of the students do not experience significant physiological symptoms that occur as the result of anxiety in regard of TDE. More than half of the respondents (57%) agree that their body shows no negative responses in regard of an increased anxiety level when they see the words "presentation" and "thesis presentation" on a course outline when studying (#2). A total amount of 43% result demonstrates the same outcome regarding whether or not they feel on edge when it was announced that students are expected to perform a presentation in a thesis examination (#9). The same can also be said for point 22, where 52% of the respondents experienced neither rigidness nor feeling tense while they were giving a thesis presentation. The synchronous effects with minimum level of body responses in terms of rigidness and feeling tense — of before, during, and after the presentation— found in the present study suggest that students do not experience any significant physiological symptoms as the effect of anxiety. This is corresponding with the fact that 57% of the respondents have had to experience hand-trembling while giving presentation (#10) with only one respondent came up with the opposite.

Table 1.2. The Percentage Answers of Structured Questionnaire

No.	Statement	Disagreement (%)		Neutral (%)	Agreement (%)	
		SD	D		A	SA
2	I feel tense when I see the words "presentation" and "thesis presentation" on a course outline when studying.	5 (21.73%)	8 (34.78%)	5 (21.73%)	5 (21.73%)	0
9	When the department announces a thesis presentation in a thesis examination, I can feel myself getting tense.	1 (4.34%)	9 (39.13%)	7 (30.43%)	6 (26.08%)	-
10	My hands tremble when I am giving a thesis presentation.	1 (4.34%)	12 (52.17%)	5 (21.73%)	4 (17.39%)	1 (4.34%)
14	I get anxious if someone asks me something about my topic that I don't know.	1 (4.34%)	4 (17.39%)	6 (26.08%)	7 (30.43%)	5 (21.73%)
19	I perspire just before starting a thesis presentation.	4 (17.39%)	6 (26.08%)	6 (26.08%)	6 (26.08%)	1 (4.34%)
20	My heart beats very fast just as I start a thesis presentation.	5 (21.73%)	1 (4.34%)	5 (21.73%)	11 (47.82%)	1 (4.34%)
22	Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while giving a thesis presentation.	5 (21.73%)	7 (30.43%)	6 (26.08%)	4 (17.39%)	-
25	I breathe faster just before starting a thesis presentation.	3 (13.04%)	7 (30.43%)	-	10 (43.47%)	3 (13.04%)
32	My heart beats very fast while I present a thesis presentation.	-	7 (30.43%)	5 (21.73%)	8 (34.78%)	3 (13.04%)

* Strongly Disagree = SD, disagree = D, Neutral = N, agree = A, Strongly Agree = SA, MD = Median, MO = Mode, Range/Item = 4.

However, they do admit of experiencing heart palpitation (#20, #32) and rapid breathing (#25). More often than not, the heart beats are faster at the start of the presentation (52%) before gradually decrease while doing the performance even if not by much (48%). As a consequence, this physiological symptom affects their ability to breathe normally as it can exacerbate breathing before the Defence Examination starts (#25). A total of 57% respondents has the same opinion on this matter. However, they do confide (43%) as to not relate this occurrence to another symptom of anxiety which is excessive sweating (#19). Interestingly, they were concern if they were asked to explain something that is outside of their knowledge even though it is still within the same research topic (#14). For them (52%), it is a nerve wrecking.

3.3. Lack of Control during Speech Performance

The third domain explores the potential emergence of control defiance that might occur during speech presentation. Lack of control inclusion reflects in both physical reaction and psychological response that occur during the presentation as the result of anxiety.

More often than not, the psychological sign of anxiety starts with the feeling of fear. The concurrent result within all statements that account for this specific emotional response shows that the majority of respondents bypassed this specific sign of mental disturbance. The general result (43%) of having no apprehension to present the thesis examination (#6) shows the students' ability to confront their worry (74%) right before starting a thesis presentation and take control of their situation to be calmer and more comfortable (#7). Ironically, 43% of the students admit that this ability to take charge of the situation cannot help them to feel relax while giving the presentation (#11), though neutral (35%) responses indicate impartial level of trepidation thus have no problem of performing the presentation (#13). A high level of disagreement (61%) confirmed that students did not experience helplessness during the presentation (#3). Synchronized effect of before-and-after experience also demonstrates the same report of parallelism. They confess (39%) of not experiencing any kind of nervousness in the hour or so just before giving a thesis presentation (#26) and make it clear that they feel light after it (#4).

Table 1.3. The Percentage Answers of Structured Questionnaire

No.	Statement	Disagreement (%)		Neutral (%)	Agreement (%)	
		SD	D		A	SA
3	My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a thesis presentation.	1 (4.34%)	10 (43.47%)	6 (26.08%)	5 (21.73%)	1 (4.34%)
4	Right after giving a thesis presentation I feel that I have had a pleasant experience.	-	-	4 (17.39%)	11 (47.82%)	8 (34.78%)
6	I have no fear of giving a thesis presentation.	2 (8.69%)	6 (26.08%)	6 (26.08%)	6 (26.08%)	3 (13.04%)
7	Although I am nervous just before starting a thesis presentation, I soon settle down after starting and feel calm and comfortable.	-	1 (4.34%)	5 (21.73%)	7 (30.43%)	10 (43.47%)
11	I feel relaxed while giving a thesis presentation.	-	10 (43.47%)	5 (21.73%)	8 (34.78%)	-

12	I enjoy preparing for a thesis presentation.	-	1 (4.34%)	13 (56.52%)	5 (21.73%)	4 (17.39%)
13	I am in constant fear of forgetting what I prepared to say.	2 (8.69%)	10 (43.47%)	8 (34.78%)	3 (13.04%)	-
16	I feel that I am in complete possession of myself while giving a thesis presentation.	1 (4.34%)	2 (8.69%)	8 (34.78%)	11 (47.82%)	1 (4.34%)
17	My mind is clear when giving a thesis presentation.	1 (4.34%)	4 (17.39%)	8 (34.78%)	7 (30.43%)	3 (13.04%)
18	I do not dread giving a thesis presentation.	1 (4.34%)	5 (21.73%)	9 (39.13%)	6 (26.08%)	2 (8.69%)
24	While giving a thesis presentation, I know I can control my feelings of tension and stress.	1 (4.34%)	3 (13.04%)	4 (17.39%)	11 (47.82%)	4 (17.39%)
26	I feel comfortable and relaxed in the hour or so just before giving a thesis presentation.	1 (4.34%)	6 (26.08%)	7 (30.43%)	5 (21.73%)	4 (17.39%)
27	I do poorer on thesis presentations because I am anxious.	4 (17.39%)	4 (17.39%)	4 (17.39%)	11 (47.82%)	-
29	When I make a mistake while giving a thesis presentation, I find it hard to concentrate on the parts that follow.	7 (30.43%)	1 (4.34%)	4 (17.39%)	-	11 (47.82%)
30	During an important thesis presentation, I experience a feeling of helplessness building up inside me.	7 (30.43%)	7 (30.43%)	6 (26.08%)	2 (8.69%)	1 (4.34%)
34	While giving a thesis presentation, I get so nervous I forget facts I really know.	6 (26.08%)	2 (8.69%)	4 (17.39%)	3 (13.04%)	8 (34.78%)

* Strongly Disagree = SD, disagree = D, Neutral = N, agree = A, Strongly Agree = SA, MD = Median, MO = Mode, Range/Item = 4.

This section was trying to find out whether anxious individuals show deficits in cognitive ability at some stage during the pressure of TDE performance. Many of the participants (44%) reveal that even though they can think straight when giving presentation (#17), they confess that more than half of them (52%) were in constant fear of forgetting what they were prepared to say (#13) as they frequently (48%) were left confused (#3). As the result of this anxiety, around 48% of the respondents admits of forgetting the detailed information they were supposed to present (#34).

Following the questionnaire result, we also examine whether students' constraint over TDE might lead to avoidance. The unbiased response (57%) over the fact that the respondents took delight in preparing thesis presentation (#12) might provide an explanation as to why they (52%) feel in full control of themselves and the situation during the presentation (#16). Subsequently, they (65%) admit of how these circumstances perhaps contribute some kind of assistance in avoiding tension and stress during the examination (#24). However, there was an agreement (48%) of how anxiety affects negatively on their performance (#27) (or even perhaps grade). They admit (48#) that making mistake while giving presentation has an effect on their concentration as its jumble with their thoughtful knowledge that follows (#29).

4. Discussion

One of the most prominent drawbacks of the anticipatory factor is the uncertainty it represents. The uncertainty formulates a complex requirement of a proper plan for the future events; like a precise balance between a much efficient preparatory actions —which ironically might furnish into a potentially inadequate solution— and some other back-up plans that are considered to be effective but potentially unnecessary. In order to understand why anticipatory factor plays a disruptive aspect in anxiety, it is better to understand from the start what the students really experience starting from their time of before the TDE.

Feeling tense and nervous while preparing for giving a presentation is the first cue in anticipatory anxiety that can be used as a standard to measure the potential average of students' anxiety since before to after the examination. Clark (2001) recounts the symptom of anticipatory anxiety to specific cognitive processing that is typically also associated with the emotional processing prior to a feared event. The individual will envisage and think of what will happen which consequently brought out and activate anxiety thoughts that are typically associated with memories of past failures, negative self-images, and poor performance prediction. In this study, the view of anxiety while in the process of preparation is associated with a sense of impending doom as to what will happen before the event took place. Additionally, there is a matter of bad experience regarding presentation in the past that might affect their mental state or readiness. However, students disregard of experiencing anxiety in relation to what kind of question to anticipate or will arise during the presentation. Somehow, this is not in accordance with the first statement, given that mulling about what kind of question and critic from the board of examiners are in league of preparation category. In this case, suppose a parallel between this outcome of Thesis Defence Examination and the common belief of social anxiety in performance were being drawn, there should have been an implication of being feared to be negatively scrutinized by public in social performance —in this case the examiners— which typically lead to excessive anxiety (Mörtberg et al., 2018). Two explanations might support these opposite outcomes: one, students associated presentation with an event that certainly will happen, a reversed psychological subjective aspect of anxiety disorder that called uncertainty that generally occurred due to the unpredictable future events (Grupe & Nitschke, 2013). However, students clearly anticipated this and fully aware that this occasion will occur therefore no anxiety can be found; two, unlike the preparation, students somehow feels that they have full control of the outcome regarding what the questions will be, a situation that dubbed as controllability (Grupe & Nitschke, 2013) where one individual convinced of having full control that can influence a terrible situation to their advantage and mitigate a negative impact (Thompson, 1981). In this regard, instead of avoiding performing because of the anxiety, students were able to evade the negative situation due to the materials and data at their disposal to help them prepare for the event.

This explanation is in concordance with the fact that the majority of the students do not feel anxious when the exact time of the presentation was announced. In their own ways, students succeed in manipulating the negative consequence of avoidance to assist them facing the situation. Accordingly, avoidance can either develop the level of the disorder or maintain it (Clark, 2005; Hofmann, 2007). It is clear that, unconsciously, students are aware that the situation will come to pass hence they take the matter of the best possible preparation into their hand by providing a complete data. Once more, putting them as the ones in full control over the unpredictable situation. In other words, instead of avoiding the stressful situation that may cause and stir their anxiety levels, they choose to face it in a subtle way by marking it as something that they have to endure. The relationship between physiological symptoms on the one hand and avoidance on the other put forward the middle ground of the safety behaviours analogy where individual with social anxiety tend to use the model to reduce and hide distress (Voncken et al., 2006). Accordingly, since they are able to somehow erect a ‘safe zone’ in their mind as the result of this self-control awareness, the experience has become less threatening; hence, sleep will come easily the night before the presentation. Similarly, on many occasions, researchers have made it clear that reduction in safety behaviours lead to reduced physiological symptoms and negative cognition (Taylor & Alden, 2010; Stangier, Heidenreich & Schermelleh-Engel, 2006; Kim, 2005; Morgan & Raffle, 1999; Wells et al., 1995).

Now let us take a look into the opposite situation of the uncontrolled-situation. Bear in mind that self-controlled awareness only occurs within the sphere of readiness once their accomplished data is presented to the examiners. In this circumstance, it is fair to say that they were the ones who have the answer to the problem. In one hand, their ability to elucidate the data and respond to the question with ‘the right answer’ helps in preventing anxiety. Daly et al. (1989) associate this low level of anxiety to the preparation stage, where an adequate preparation for performance helps in suppressing the anxiety level. However, it doesn’t mean that they would not feel nervous at all. On the other hand, even though they are aware that they were expected to perform, it does not mean the prospect of giving a presentation was easy to carry out. At this point, it is easy to conclude that rather than the long-time preparation, it was the last-minute preparation that increases students’ level of anxiety. At this phase, students were cautious over the specific aspects, important events, and the major features that will transpire (Behnke & Sawyer, 1999). Furthermore, it is believed that it was not a negative projection of an unknown outcome that worried the students but the uncertainty of an unknown experience that might manifest during the TDE. This result draws heavily on Clark and Wells’ (1995) model of assumption that illustrates the occurrence of social anxiety when an individual entered a feared situation. They called it the ‘unconditional beliefs about the self’ which is a projection of negative evaluation of others that lead individual to appraise a situation as dangerous. As the result, the students become anxious. In other words, they can control the information but not the performance.

In the second part of the analysis, the body’s responses to anxiety prior and after the performance were analyzed. In addition to that, how one’s body alerts to the ‘threat’ and its reactions of dealing with the so-called ‘threat’ is also presented. In order to do that, some types of the unique symptoms linked to the anxiety will be the benchmark of this study.

The first two questions (#2 and #9) that are included in this domain somehow present an indirect link to the anticipatory anxiety in terms of the controlled and the uncontrolled situation. In regard to the anticipatory factor, it is important to note that the highest level of anxiety occurred before the scheduled examination period (Martin, 1997). So how come the result of this study shows otherwise? To comprehend this inclination, it is better to understand Behnke and Sawyer’s (1999) take on three characteristic events of the anticipation stage: (1) immediately after receiving the assignment, (2) during speech preparation before the presentation, and (3) immediately after starting speaking. However, the anxiety itself is short-lived (Scherer, 1993) and most “apparent during the first 90 seconds of the speech” (Booth-Butterfield, 1987, p.395), implying that the speakers have a tendency to overcome their anxiety and adjust to the situation. Furthermore, the subsequent event after the anticipatory action could be affected by the nature of the assignment itself (Carlile, Behnke & Kitchens, 1977). In other words, the significant level of the task at hand could affect students’ sentiment and reaction to anxiety. In this study, the students acknowledge the fact that they were aware of the possibility that they will have to present a thesis presentation during their period of study thus they fully expect to have a course specifically outlined for the thesis presentation and thesis examination. As students, they know that they were expected to follow through this period of learning. This ‘prior knowledge’ and ‘responsibility-expectation’ aspect tone down the surprise factor that might lead to anxiety during the performance. In other words, they are aware and prepared to face the thesis defence presentation. Rosenfeld et al. (1995) explain this anomaly regarding low level anxiety during thesis examination by saying that normally students with high academic achievement were lest apprehensive in communication and perceive themselves as competent speakers in front of others while those with less academically successful history were not. Somehow, the awareness, expectation, knowledge, and information that they acquire prior to the D-day of the thesis presentation help dislocate the tension and rigidness that materialized whenever the word ‘presentation’ appeared or mentioned.

Some can be said for the statement “certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while giving a thesis presentation”. Students experienced no qualm of tension while giving the presentation. To understand this concept of physical responses during public speaking, perhaps it is better to remember that while some people generally do feel anxious during the communication process, some were not (Ayres & Hopf, 1993). Due to this personalize conceptualized trait, some were good at public communication while some were faced with various anxieties. Both these factors of poor public speaking performance and bad communication lead to a public speaking anxiety. Bodie (2010) lets it slip that while communication-based anxiety corresponds to public speaking anxiety, the actual presentation (performance) leads to physiological arousal (e.g., increased heart rate), negative self-focused cognitions (e.g., “I’m afraid I’ll make a fool of myself), and/or behavioural association symptoms (e.g., shaking). For these reasons, the students’ full control of what they want to present during the examination plays an important role in minimizing the physical symptom of tension and body responses seeing as they were a proficient public communicator —in this case they were good at presenting their thesis presentation. In lieu to that, this self-controlled awareness upon the situation mayhap lends some kinds of assistants in preventing them of experiencing unnecessary body’s response. There were disagreement concerning hand-trembling while in the process of performing thesis defence.

An interesting point of controlled-situation is proven right whenever they were asked to answer or explain something about their topic but was not within their expertise to elucidate. It has been mentioned in which the ‘prior-knowledge’, in this case the data, helps students reign some sorts of control over the situation and prevent them from experiencing anxiety. Should the examiners inquire them to articulate an issue or a question of their research topic that they were not familiar with, the opposite effect will occur. In this state, feeling anxious and nervous during the Thesis Defence Examination is not something that they can prevent.

This mental disturbance generates the physiological change in the body during the thesis examination, especially in heart race and breathing (Bodie, 2010). An abnormal increased of heart race might be associated with the ‘unknown factor’ the students envision before the exam. It could be in the form of the examiners’ responses, the fear of inadequate data presentation, the unexpected questions, or simply because they were feeling not sufficiently skilled or expecting a bad result from the start. However, they were disagreeing that this level of anxiety might cause perspiration in any form either before or after they started the presentation.

5. Conclusion

Examining interrelationships between anxiety in general and students’ speaking anxiety symptom clusters can paint some ideas about what the students’ really feel, experience, and underwent during the Thesis Defence Examination (TDE). It is a result that sheds light into what mentally transpired and being responded into action. Our findings point to the prominent role of uncertainty in the anticipatory factor before the examination that typically led to disruptive and negative drawback in performance. However, a psychological counter attack to uphold the opposite outcomes came in the form of control ability, where the students disregard the anxiety and take full control of the situation through perfect preparation. This self-control awareness gives them full supremacy to evade avoidance and fear of the unpredictable situation and reduce their anxiety levels. However, it does not mean they can successfully dodge the social anxiety when it rears its ugly head during the uncontrolled-situation in which their project negative self-evaluation and perceived TDE as a dangerous situation. In lieu to that, self-control awareness and preparation also translated positively into the body's responses to anxiety. The students are well-aware of what were expected from them so they came well prepared thus minimizing the unnecessary body's responses.

In TDE, there are some segments that both bachelor and master's students of English Education have to go through by performing their skills in English public speaking, for example, the introduction segment, defence proper segment, and closing segment. In our research, we focus on the anxiety experienced by the English postgraduate students in a Thesis Defence Examination as a whole communicative event, not specifically in each segment. It is also crucial for future researchers to explore students' anxiety in particular segment, exclusively in defence proper segment where the students have to use their English public speaking to argue and defence their argument in order to pass the examination.

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Challenges of online learning of English/French language in higher education in Ghana

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Abstract

This study investigated the challenges that learners of English and French encountered during their participation in online language learning in a university in Ghana. The study adopted a quantitative survey approach by administering online questionnaire to undergraduate students at the university and analysing the data using descriptive statistics.150 students participated in the study. The results indicate that majority of the students generally feel that online language learning is bedeviled with a lot of challenges, notably technology availability, accessibility, and affordability, as well as the lack of capacity on the part of language instructors to effectively deliver in their online teaching activities. The study further discusses students' opinions and experiences with the objective of determining the prospects of online language learning within the Ghanaian tertiary education context. Based on the findings, some pragmatic pedagogical measures like migrating teaching and learning activities from basic to tertiary levels to full online teaching and learning of all subjects and courses and creating a technological fund with the intention of mobilising funds to empower every home technologically, were proposed to stakeholders to enable them to minimise the challenges of online learning in Ghana.

Keywords: Online language learning; Ghanaian Universities; Student Experiences; English language; French language

1. Introduction

All schools from basic to the tertiary levels in Ghana were closed due to the outbreak of Corona virus pandemic. It was for this reason that the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Communication, was tasked to roll out distance learning programmes at all levels in the country (University World News, 2020; Fenyi, Andoh & Awukuvi, 2020). It is an indisputable fact that, the adoption of online learning and teaching is associated with so many difficulties or challenges, particularly, when it comes to teaching/learning of English or French, in almost every developing

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country (Fenyi et al, 2020; Tabiri, 2017). It is against this background that the researchers found it expedient to embark on this study with the aim of finding out learners' difficulties with online learning during the period of the Corona virus pandemic. In other words, this research work was undertaken with the aim of identifying students' online learning challenges when it comes to either teaching/learning English or French. Not only that, but the study also seeks to find and propose solutions that could help to overcome those difficulties in online language (s) learning in higher education in Ghana.

Online teaching/learning can either be a 100% delivery of courses or lessons online without any face-to-face teaching/learning of the course content or a hybrid course delivery where there is a combination of offline and online methods or mode of lessons' delivery (Chenoweth, Ushida & Murday, 2006).

Even though technology saves time and energy, and that a learner can learn English or French lessons through the internet without the need of travelling and without the need of leaving home (Dangi, 2019). With strong internet connectivity, students can learn either English or French anywhere at any time and whenever in a very flexible way. However, technical challenges or problems that are usually associated with the adoption of full online learning and teaching cannot be overemphasized.

1.1. Problem Statement

"For some time now, virtual schools have become an alternative to popular traditional, brick and mortar schools and advocates promote the former as a way for kids to complete lessons at their own pace in almost any location" (Daily Graphic, page 7, Tuesday, June 9, 2020).

However, it is clear from the available data that developing countries have a great challenge of internet accessibility and poor internet connectivity (Tabiri, 2021; Fenyi et al, 2020; Tabiri, 2017). It is true that, amidst the period of the covid'19 pandemic, technology is now the best option for teaching and learning. But the problems that technology poses to students cannot be overemphasised. For instance, in an economy that has not been able to provide even stable or constant electricity for all parts of the country, and where only a privileged few have access to the internet, the objective of getting school children to complete schoolwork at their own pace and from remote places will be problematic.

It is informative and revealing to know that even developed countries can pay dearly if proper precautionary measures are not adhered to with respect to the corona virus pandemic. The following quotation stresses the need not to encourage face-to-face schools due to Corona virus pandemic:

"Just one week after a third of French school children went back to school in an easing of the Coronavirus lockdown, there has been a worrying flare-up of about 70 COVID-19 cases linked to schools, the government said on Monday". (Thomas Adamson, May 18, 2020)

The above quotation depicts that an easing or lifting of a ban on public gatherings particularly reopening of schools led to a perturbing increase of COVID-19 pandemic cases even in a developed country like France. Considering the havoc and threatening repercussions of Coronavirus pandemic, it has become highly crucial for all educational institutions worldwide to adopt online teaching and learning to the detriment of either face-to-face or hybrid method of teaching and learning globally (Chenoweth, Ushida, & Murday, 2006).

1.2. Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study was to find out the challenges that learners of English/French typically experience when they participate in online learning in Ghana especially in the wake of the Corona virus pandemic.

The following specific objectives guided this study:

1. To determine the factors influencing the effectiveness of online language learning within the Ghanaian tertiary education context from the student perspective.

2. To establish the prospects of online language learning in a Ghanaian university based on students' self-reported opinions and experiences.

3. To propose some pedagogical measures to minimise students' online learning difficulties.

1.3. Research questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. Why do students of English (L2) and French (L3) find it difficult to learn online?

2. What are the challenges that the students of English (L2) and French (L3) encounter in online learning?

3. What are the pedagogical measures that should be taken to minimise students' online learning difficulties?

2. Literature Review

The role of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the 21st Century educational set up cannot be overemphasised. Its relevance in the teaching/learning process in general is crucial and its application in the teaching and learning of English is imperative. This is essentially associated with the acquisition and proficiency of the language at different levels and for different purposes (Ntongieh, 2016). The following quotation lays emphasis on the importance of technology following the outbreak of Corona virus pandemic:

"All universities, Senior High Schools and basic schools, public and private schools will be closed Monday, March 16, 2020, till further notice. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Communication, has been tasked to roll out distance learning programmes". (President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, 2020).

The above directive of the President of the Republic of Ghana depicts how serious the situation became. That is to say that for the President to be compelled to close all schools and universities both public and private institutions, because of a pandemic –Coronavirus, is not out of place. Also, following the closure of schools almost everywhere, UNESCO recommended the use of distance learning programmes and open educational applications and platforms that schools and teachers can use to reach learners remotely and limit the disruption of education (UNESCO, March 2020). Webinar has therefore become the best option for online learning. Webinar is an interactive seminar conducted via the World Wide Web (Your Dictionary, 2020). Usually a live presentation, lecture or workshop that happens in real time as users participate through chatting, video-chatting, file-sharing, or asking questions with a microphone (Your Dictionary, 2020). Webinars are more helpful in learning languages where there is a strong availability of internet. According to Madhavi (2010), communicative method for learning languages combines extensively, high-quality content with flexible and interactive multimedia technology. In other words, the emergence of Technology in

Didactics (TD) encourages more active participation of learners (andragogy) thereby minimizing teacher centredness in teaching and learning.

It is even evident from daily usage of internet that, English language is the highest language used as of Monday, June 29, 2020 (Statista statistics, 2020).

The English language has 25.3% of internet users worldwide. As all subjects are taught in English in Ghana except French language, it buttresses the fact that even non teachers or lecturers of English use English online to deliver their respective courses every day due to the closure of face-to-face schools because of Coronavirus pandemic. Again, Internet World Stats (2020) gives a vivid description of top ten languages used in the web with English language leading which emphasises that the highest language used globally is English.

According to Alscher (2020), webinars have a unique set of challenges, but technical issues are universal across industries, activities, and people around the world. Alscher (2020) goes ahead to propose that if one is organizing a webinar, the largest challenge one must prepare to face is the challenge of technical difficulties. Prepare ahead of time by running through a few checks. First, check your environment: internet stability, camera positioning, lighting, and sound should all be tested before launching your webinar at least a day beforehand.

All academic institutions in Ghana have been compelled to stick to online teaching and learning following the directives of the President of the Republic of Ghana. It is for this reason that the researchers found the following statement by the Vice Chancellor of Ghana Communication Technology University highly innovative:

"…on the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, an emergency meeting between management and key stakeholders held on Monday, 16th March, 2020 decided on the following: "Face-to-face teaching and learning has been suspended. All classes are to be delivered online starting from Monday, 23rd March 2020 until further notice".

The researchers therefore found it necessary to study how Ghana Communication Technology University really adopted online learning fully amidst its challenges.

3. Methodology

The study adopted quantitative method to gather data. The instruments for data collection were observation and questionnaire. The research population was about 300. The purposive sampling strategy was used to select the study site and participants. In other words, the researchers opted for a university that is well noted to be making judicious use of technology in teaching/learning before and during Coronavirus pandemic. The participants were 150 out of 300 first year students at Ghana Communication Technology University who willingly provided responses to the questionnaire, which was sent to them electronically. This technological approach survey was done by creating and sharing a google form or link with participants to enable them to contribute to the study by answering the questionnaire remotely to enable the researchers to arrive at the answers to the research questions in the study. That is to say that the researchers shared the link on the Ghana Communication Technology University Learning Management or online platform and asked all the 300 students who might be willing to answer the questionnaire. The students were given two weeks to contribute to the study.

These student participants had been learning online through a hybrid mode (online and face-to-face simultaneously) before the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic in Ghana. That is to say that the students at Ghana Communication Technology University had been taught English language and French as well as other courses online since they started pursuing their university education in September 2019 and January 2020. The choice of the researchers is consistent with Parahoo (1997) as well as Shughenssy and Zechmeister (1990) who also say that a purposive sampling method is usually adopted in the study based on the respondents' ability to provide the useful data. The researchers wanted to find out if the students had been facing some challenges since their university adopted full online learning although they were accustomed to online education even before the outbreak of the pandemic.

4. Results and Discussion

The duty of the researchers here is to analyse the responses of students on adopting full online teaching and learning following the closure of face-to-face schools in most parts of the world in 2020, which Ghana is not an exception. The analyses of students' responses would enable us to appreciate and assess the major challenges that they encounter in online learning and teaching in French or English language so as to ascertain whether adopting hybrid way of teaching language courses (i.e. online and traditional modes of instructions simultaneously) is pedagogically advisable, commendable and crucial in African education institutions particularly in the universities.

From the biodata of the respondents, one can realise that students who are between 18 to 25 years constitute 76.4 per cent representing the highest respondents, thereby emphasising the point that they are youthful and might be well versed in technology and highly innovative when it comes to using technology. The ages of the students are as follows:

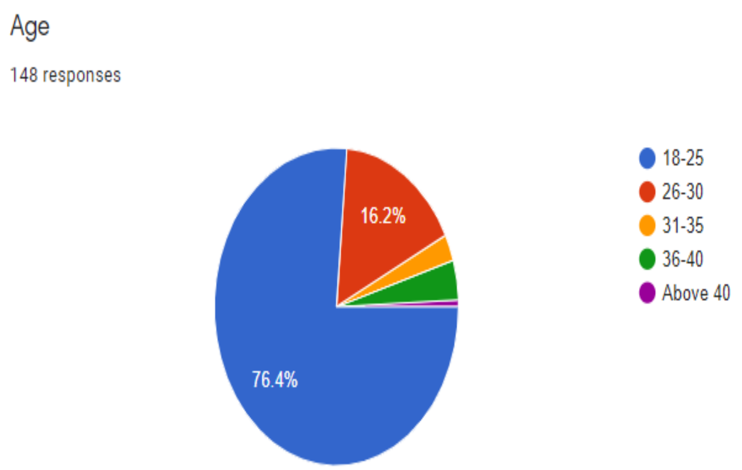

Figure 1. Biodata of the participants

The figure below shows the aspects of language that students of English/French were not convenient or did not like learning online. It was revealed that 43 % of the respondents said that they did not like learning Phonetics and Phonology online.

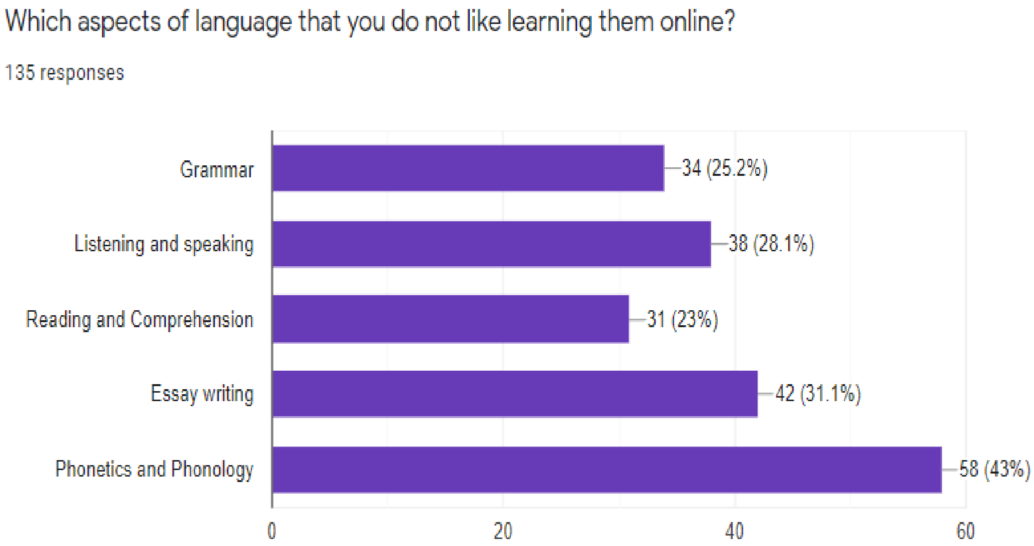

Figure 2. Aspects of language that students do not like learning them online

One can see from the following chart that 38.5 per cent of the students enjoyed all aspects of language online, 35.1 per cent did not like all aspects of language while 26.4 per cent of the respondents were uncertain of their preference.

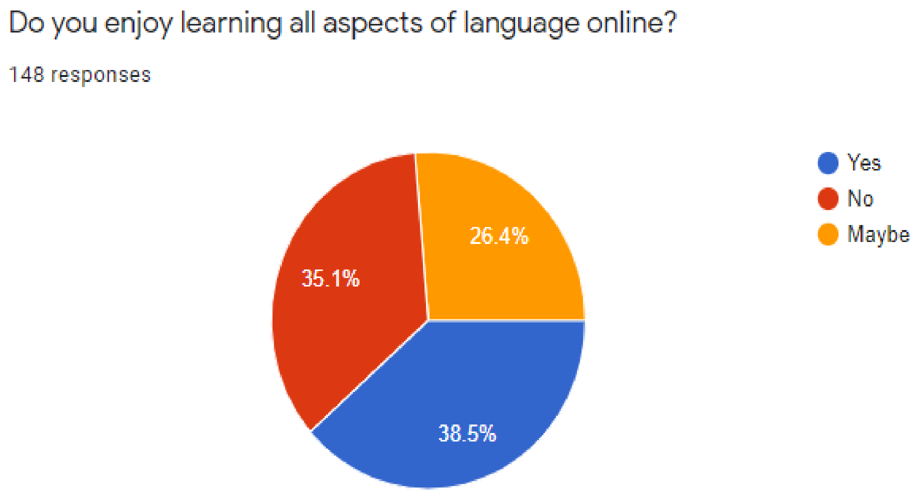

Figure 3. Learning aspects of language online

It is pathetic to know that more than half of the respondents did not have access to internet in their houses. It was found that 51.7% of the students did not have access to internet. One may ask, how can students go online as they do not have easy access to internet in their houses? Our next finding revealed that as students did not have easy access to online, they would definitely be compelled to resort to various means of going online.

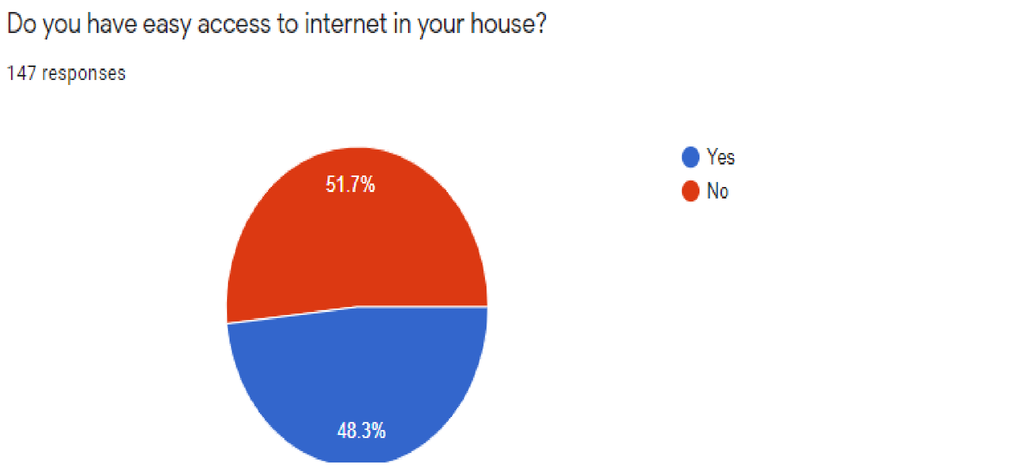

Figure 4. Accessibility of internet at home

Moreover, the students were asked as to whether their parents have a router like turbo-net in their houses, and it was revealing to note that 85 % of them said their parents did not have any form of router. As students' parents do not have any turbo-net, how can they go online to learn when the school has now been shifted to their home? The chart depicting whether students' parents have any form of router is as follows:

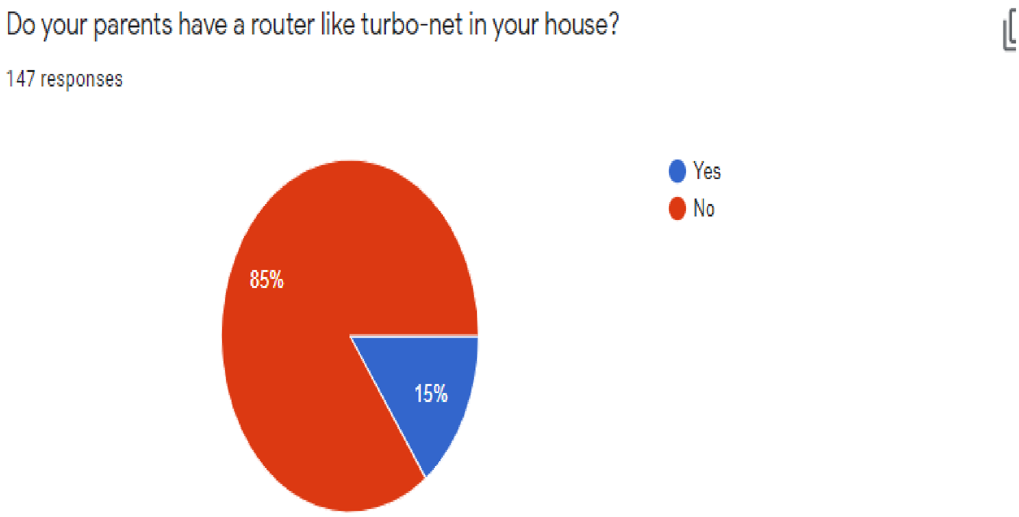

Figure 5. Depicting students who have a turbo-net

Furthermore, the following figure represents various ways that university students had to resort to in order to go online to take part in learning English or pursuing their various programmes of studies. It was revealed that about 77.5% of the students had to go to a place where they could have access to internet connectivity. The detailed results are as follows:

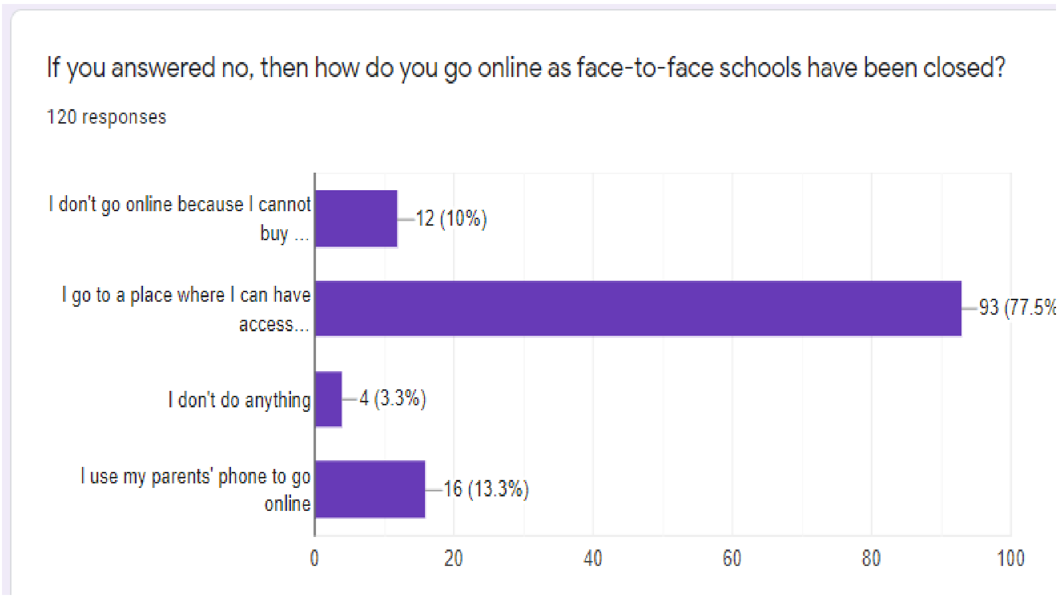

Figure 6. How students go online

Also, it is an undeniable fact that a majority of Ghanaians do not have access to any strong internet connectivity. The respondents were therefore asked to contribute by proposing what the government through the Ministry of Education could do to address the needs of students in remote locations with little or no access to internet connectivity. It was found in the responses that 126 students representing 86.3% proposed that it would be highly expedient for the government to help improved internet accessibility and connectivity without delay nationwide.

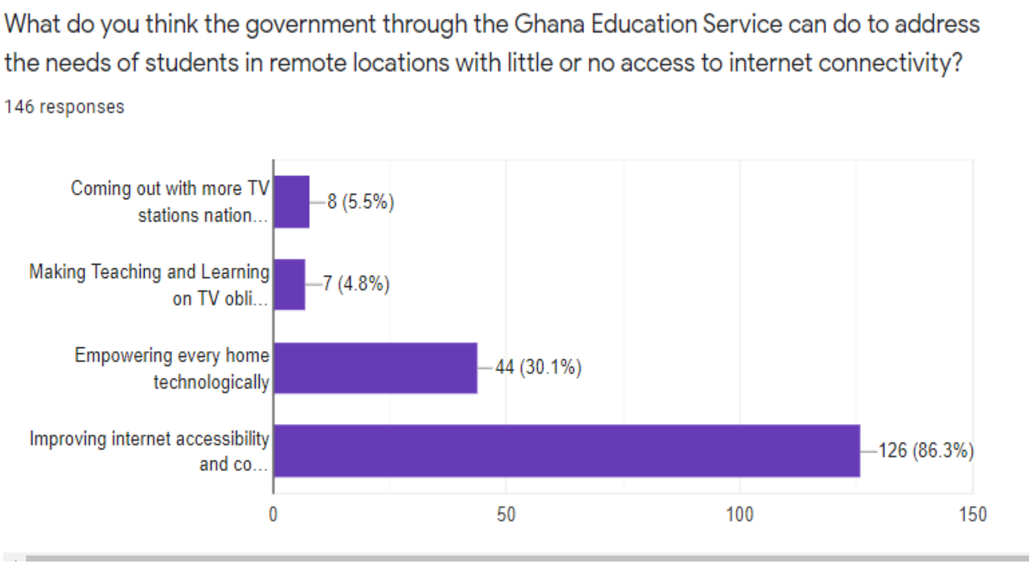

Figure 7. Students' suggestions to improve internet accessibility and connectivity

Again, it was revealed in the study that it is no longer necessary to lay emphasis on furnishing face-to-face schools with computer equipment and internet accessibility but rather there is now an urgent need to empower every home technologically to enable all students to pursue their programmes of studies with ease. It was uncovered in the study that 89.9 per cent of the respondents stressed the need for the government of Ghana to make internet connectivity easily accessible to every home. The following chart shows the need to empower every home technologically:

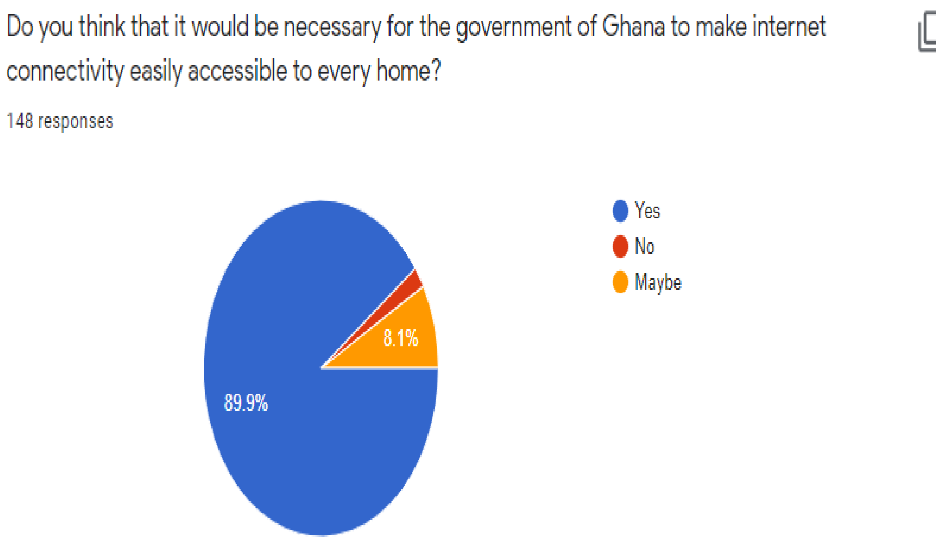

Figure 8. Making internet accessible to every home

It is so surprising to know that even students who attend a university that spearheads the adoption and adaptation of technology in teaching and learning found it difficult sometimes to use online/videoconferencing platforms like Zoom and Teams. One can deduce from the responses that 37.8% of the students found it difficult to use online teaching and learning platforms, 36.5% of them said they did face major difficulty using online teaching and learning platforms while 25.7% of the students were indecisive.

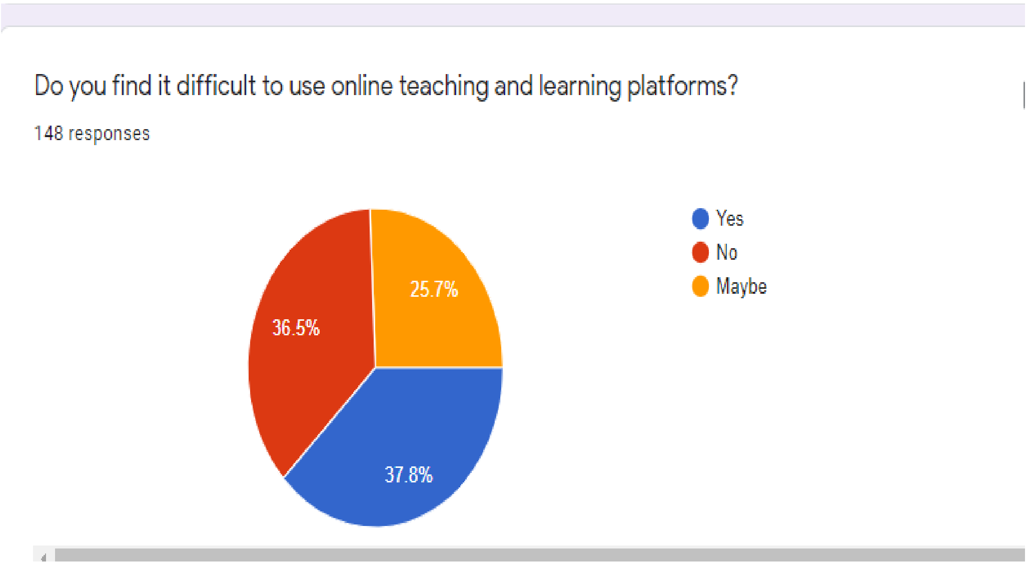

Figure 9. Finding out the difficulties students face in going online

Moreover, it was uncovered in the study that all the students faced some major problems either adopting or adapting fully online learning following the outbreak of the pandemic. The major problems of the students were identified to be no provision of electricity, power outage, inaccessibility of internet, poor internet connectivity as well as the challenge of learners and instructors who might not be inclined technologically to make judicious use of online teaching and learning platforms in the wake of Corona virus pandemic. The statistics and the analysis of the 150 students' responses depicting their major problems are poor internet connectivity (87.4%), inaccessibility of internet (31.1%), learners and instructors lacking technological skills (23.8%), power outage (18.9%) and no provision of electricity (4.9%). The following chart gives a vivid description of the major problems encountered by students during the full adoption of online teaching and learning at the Ghana Communication Technology University (formerly known as Ghana Technology University College).

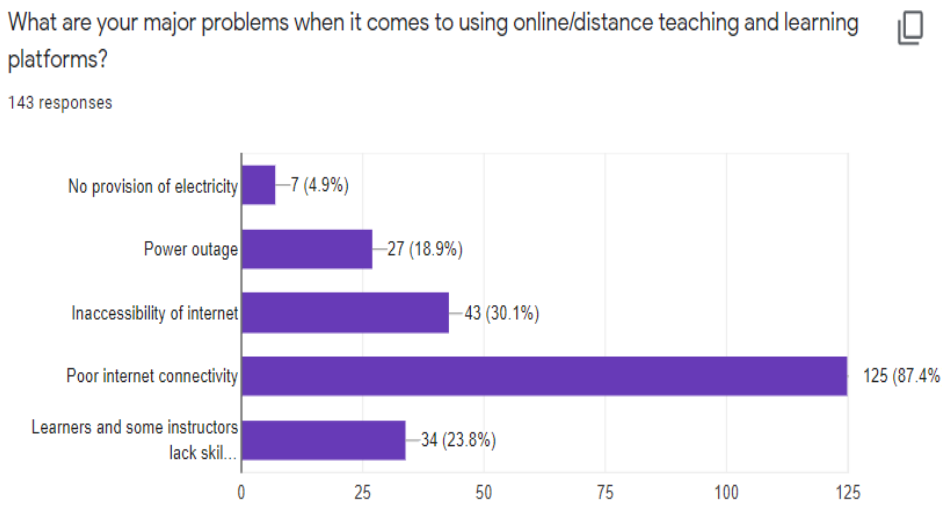

Figure 10. Major problems in online teaching and learning

No wonder about 32.7 % said that they did not like online/distance learning and teaching. The summary of their likes and dislikes are as follows:

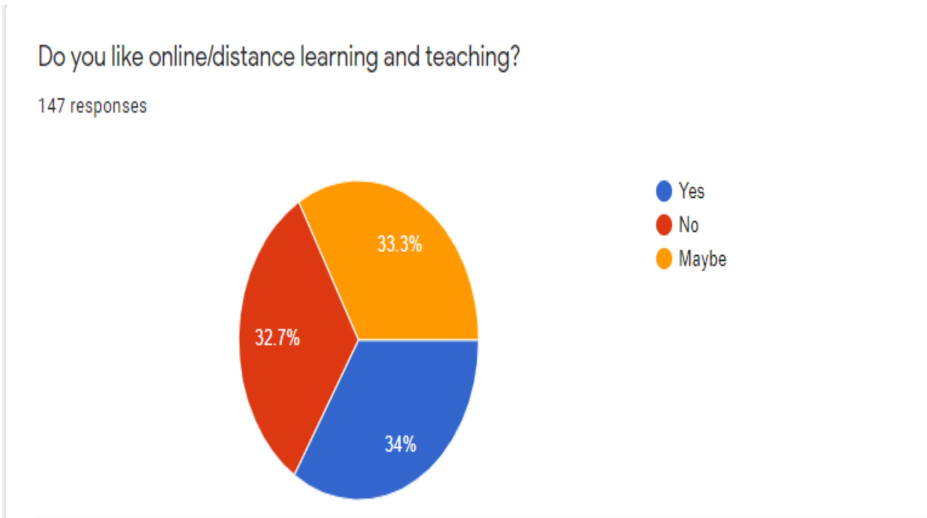

Figure 11. Finding out whether students like online learning

Finally, the students were asked to air their views on the cost of using online learning without any face-to-face contact in teaching and learning. It was revealed in the study that 36.1% of the students strongly agreed that online/distance teaching and learning was extremely expensive while 34% of the students agreed that online learning was extremely expensive and 17.7 % of them were indecisive that online learning was extremely expensive. In short, from the analysis, one can see that 70.1% of the students had realised that online learning was highly exhorbitant and not easily affordable.

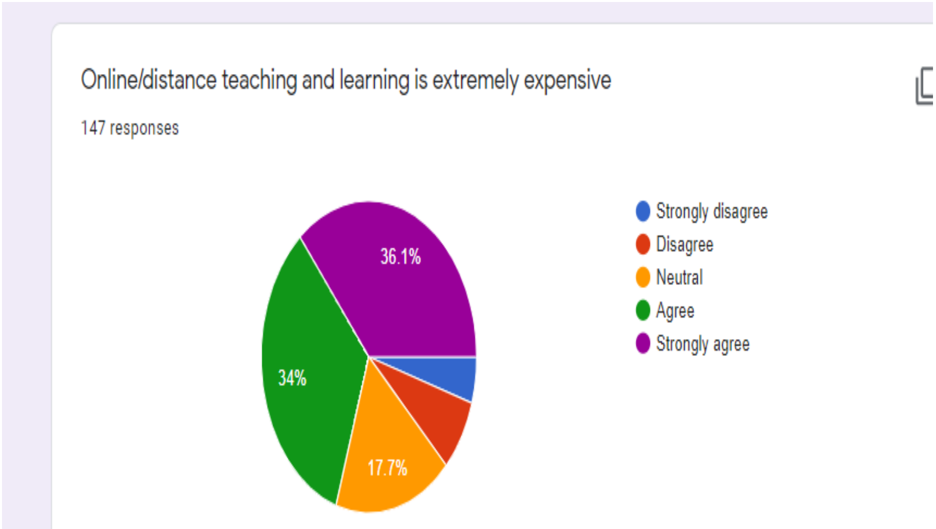

Figure 12. The cost of online learning

From the foregoing analyses and discussions, one can realize that online teaching and learning is pregnant with so many issues especially poor internet connectivity, frequent power outage and inaccessibility of internet in some places in Ghana.

It is an indisputable fact that, even some teachers/lecturers and university students are not comfortable when it comes to using some Learning Management Systems and videoconferencing or teleconferencing platforms like Zoom and Teams, but looking at the current situation worldwide, learners, teachers and lecturers have no option than to succumb to online/distance teaching and learning.

5. Pedagogical Implications of Online Teaching and Learning of Languages in Ghana

Pedagogically and didactically, every language can easily be learnt and mastered after learning its sounds or phonics. It is therefore expedient for teachers and lecturers to whet the interest of English (L2) and French (L3) students in Phonetics and Phonology by making this aspect of the language practical. Where instructors of English (L2) or French (L3) in Ghana themselves find Phonetics and Phonology difficult to teach, they should resort to the adoption of the native speakers of English or French recordings and play the recordings daily for learners to learn the language directly or indirectly from the native speakers, thereby promoting and incorporating applied technology in teaching and learning languages.

What can our leaders do during this educational shift from school to our students' villages? How can the government through the Ghana Education Service address the needs of students in remote locations with little or no access to internet connectivity?

The government's introduction, through the Ghana Education Service, of Distance Learning for Basic Schools on Ghana Learning TV to promote continuous teaching/learning in the wake of Coronavirus is highly commendable (Fenyi et al, 2020; Tabiri, 2020). However, if it is possible, the Parliament should enact or pass a bill to make teaching/learning on both public and private TV stations obligatory from 7 am to 12 noon daily before any programme with the aim of helping children/learners who may not have access to internet in the country to learn (Tabiri, 2020). If this is not done nationwide, most parents particularly, those who are fond of watching movies and other non-academic programmes will not even encourage their children to take an active participation in distance learning on Ghana Learning TV and Joy Learning Channel. Once Pre-Tertiary Online/Distance Education Bill is promulgated and passed in Ghana, every class/level will be assigned to a particular TV station for all students, learners, pupils as well as instructors will be able to adhere to the curricula with ease. In other words, making teaching and learning compulsory on all TV and FM stations will definitely help to ensure that the academic calendar continue without any disruption. The importance of passing a bill to make teaching and learning on all TV and FM stations nationwide obligatory due to Coronavirus pandemic cannot be overemphasised. In short, promoting online teaching and learning can only become effective when all homes have been empowered technologically with regard to easy accessibility of internet as well as improving connectivity nationwide.

Similarly, Ammanni and Aparanjani (2016) assert that the most efficient medium for teaching is television. The television appeals both to the ears and eyes (Ammanni and Aparanjani, 2016). It is against this background that the researchers believe that it would be necessary to adopt or adapt television and radio learning in Africa, particularly, in Ghana where learners do not have easy access to internet connectivity. According to Ammanni and Aparanjani (2016), radio and television give learners the experience of real world into the classroom (Ammanni and Aparanjani, 2016).

It has been revealed that online teaching and learning is one of the multimedia means of ensuring learners' centredness and active participation in teaching and learning. Also, pedagogically and andragogically, lecture notes or lessons online promote accessibility and repetition of lessons that could avert forgetfulness in learning.

Moreover, all BECE and WASSCE candidates can resort to online teaching/learning instead of attending face-to-face classes. It is all about creating learning management platforms for all the candidates. If creating learning management system immediately for all the candidates may be difficult, because of the financial responsibilities that various stakeholders must shoulder, then parents/guardians' phone numbers can be used to create WhatsApp platforms for all candidates in every school, whereby parents will only allow their wards to use phones during lessons on WhatsApp. In other words, parents/guardians will be required to do WhatsApp registration with their numbers on behalf of their wards and get to know the timetable for each of the subjects on WhatsApp to monitor WhatsApp teaching/learning of their wards. In other words, it is crucial to resort to teaching/learning management platforms or WhatsApp teaching and learning for BECE and WASSCE candidates instead of asking them to go to school amidst the threat of Coronavirus. That is making judicious use of technology in didactics/pedagogy which is one of the precautionary measures against a pandemic-Coronavirus.

In short, is it possible to make online teaching/learning mandatory/obligatory at least at the tertiary level so that no academic institution, particularly, a university will be closed when there is an unforeseen circumstance? It is the anticipation of the researchers that gradually the Government would compel all second cycle and tertiary institutions to opt for online teaching/learning in Ghana.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service should see how to migrate teaching and learning activities from basic to tertiary levels to full online teaching and learning of all subjects and courses.

It would be expedient for the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service to create a technological fund with the intention of mobilizing funds to empower every home technologically. It is no longer furnishing physical or face-to-face schools with computers, but it is about empowering every home with computers, internet accessibility and improving internet connectivity nationwide. It is equally necessary for philanthropic people and organisations to start contributing to educational/technological fund.

Also, apart from the numerous existing educational committees, it will not be out of place to set up a technological committee consisting of teachers from basic to the tertiary levels to spearhead how to ensure effective and efficient teaching and learning online (Tabiri, 2020). This is the time for ICT experts in the country to use their attained expertise and knowledge to help all and sundry to make a judicious use of technology in our educational institutions (Tabiri, 2020). This is because, having certificates in ICT without showing any pragmatic or practical competence is a mirage and synonymous with illiteracy in applied technology in education. In short, promoting online teaching and learning can only become effective when all homes have been empowered technologically regarding easy accessibility of internet as well as improving connectivity nationwide.

6. Conclusion

From the foregoing discussions and findings, it would be highly necessary for the government to find means of addressing the challenges that university students encounter in adopting online teaching and learning in Ghana. Without addressing those online challenges in teaching and learning, adopting or adapting online teaching and learning in the country will be a monumental fiasco. If students at the tertiary level, particularly, those who are in a technology university like the Ghana Communication Technology University are facing difficulties in adopting online teaching and learning, what will be the fate of learners in other academic institutions such as from basic to tertiary levels that are not well noted to be spearheading or pioneering applied technology in education? It is therefore incumbent upon educational stakeholders to empower learners technologically in their homes instead of furnishing face-to-face schools technologically. It will be difficult for learners to study from home effectively without being empowered technologically at home.

In this study, the analysis of the data gathered from the 150 students' responses revealed their major challenges with online learning. These problems are poor internet connectivity (87.4%), inaccessibility of internet (31.1%), learners' and instructors' lack of technological skills (23.8%), power outage (18.9%) and no provision of electricity in some villages in Ghana (4.9%).

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APPENDIX

The questionnaire to students learning English and French who took part in the survey for the Online teaching and learning at the Ghana Communication Technology University is as follows:

QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS LEARNING ENGLISH (L2) OR FRENCH (L3) IN GHANA

Dear Student,

Following the closure of all schools in Ghana due to the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry of Communication, was tasked to roll out distance learning programmes at all levels in the country. It is an indisputable fact that, the adoption of distance/online learning/teaching is associated with so many difficulties or challenges, particularly, when it comes to teaching/learning of English or French, in almost every developing country.

This is a research work we are undertaking, which aims at identifying students' and teachers' online teaching/learning challenges when it comes to either teaching/learning English or French and seeking to overcome those difficulties in teaching/learning language (s) in Ghana.

You are kindly requested to contribute your views by answering all the following questions. Please be assured that the information given will be treated as confidential.

Part I

Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )

Age: …………………………………

Name of institution/school: …………………………………………………….

Programme of study: ………………………………………………………………….

5. Level/Form/Class: ………………………………………………………………

Part II

1. Do you enjoy learning all aspects of the language online?

a) Yes b) No c) Not really

2. What are some of the aspects of language that you do not like learning them online?

………
………
……………………………………………………………………………………………3. Do you have easy access to internet in your house?

Yes b) No

4. Do your parents have a router like turbonet in your house?

Yes b) No

5. If you answered no, then how do you go online as face-to-face schools have been closed?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

6. Do you think that it would be necessary for the government of Ghana to make internet connectivity easily accessible to every home?

A. Yes B. No C. It is not necessary

7. What do you think the government through the Ghana Education Service can do to address the needs of students in remote locations with little or no access to internet connectivity?

……………………………………………………………………………………..

……

……………………………………………………………………….

8. Can teaching and learning on TV be used effectively in remote places where there is no internet accessibility?

a) I strongly think so b) Maybe c) I don’t think so

9. Do you find it difficult to use online teaching and learning platforms?

a) Yes b) No c) Sometimes d) Always

10. What are your major problems when it comes to using online/distance teaching and learning platforms?

……

……

………………………………………………………………………

11. Do you like online/distance learning and teaching?

a) Yes b) No

12. Why do you like online/distance learning and teaching?

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…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

13. Online/distance teaching and learning is extremely expensive.

Thank you.

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Media management and marketing: world practice and problems of the Kazakh press

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Abstract

New technologies have been introduced into the life of the public in such a way that the preferences of modern readers (viewers, listeners) have changed and the volume of demand for modern journalism has increased. It is clear that in the future, the importance of the information industry will increase along with the functionality of the media. The purpose of this study is to investigate the modern mass media of Kazakhstan, as well as to study the existing problems in the field of management and marketing. The methodological framework of this study included the theoretical methods of scientific cognition. In this study, methods of information synthesis and analysis were applied, a comparative method, a method of system data analysis, and a theoretical analysis of literature sources on the subject matter was carried out. In addition, to analyse the level of interest of readers, a survey was conducted among the residents of Kazakhstan. The study analyses the practice of Kazakh newspapers. Such as: "Egemen Kazakhstan", "Business Kazakhstan", "Risk Business" and "Uba-Inform". The study investigated the main problems of the Kazakh media. The practical value of this study lies in the results presented in it, as they can be used to study the experience of foreign and Kazakh mass media. The study also presents practical recommendations that can be used by managers and marketers of various media resources.

Keywords: mass media; Kazakh press; media management; global information space; Kazakh journalism

1. Introduction

It is extremely important to properly plan the management policy and marketing strategy in the modern competitive market environment. In the information age, the media (mass media) must adapt to the changing habits and needs of the current audience. As time shows, conventional management methods have long been outdated and do not meet today's requirements. New technologies have been introduced into the life of the public in such a way that the preferences of modern readers (viewers, listeners) have changed and the volume of demand for modern journalism has increased. It is clear that in the future, the importance of the information industry will increase along with the functionality of the media. This necessitates a new approach to media management, coordination of work, as well as promotion, distribution and increased payback, that is, a new approach to management and marketing. Therefore, it became necessary to scientifically investigate this area, to make a comprehensive analysis and serious conclusions. The relevance of the study lies in the examination of the best models of management and marketing in the best modern publications in the world, a comparative analysis of Kazakh newspapers with foreign ones. And evidently, their implementation in the practice of the Kazakh press (Suleimenova, 2017; Atabekova et al., 2016; Saifnazarov et al., 2020).

The declaration of independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan led to fundamental changes in the activities of the media as a result of a paradigm shift in its historical development. In fact, the country faced the task of developing a qualitatively new information space and its gradual integration into the world system. Among the first legislative acts adopted by independent Kazakhstan is the "Law on the Press and Other Mass Media" of 1991, which was a convincing confirmation of Kazakhstan's commitment to the democratic route in development. This document proclaimed freedom of speech and the press. This became the impetus for the establishment of a legal framework for the functioning of the media. However, in the course of further accelerated development of Kazakhstan in a market economy, the functioning of a single republican law on mass media was insufficient to provide all the necessary conditions for the qualitative growth of domestic mass media. Therefore, in April 1992, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan issued a decree ordering the Government to develop measures to protect the media during the country's transition period (Zhumash, 2017; Saifnazarov, 2019).

The areas of management and marketing are quite well researched in scientific terms. However, management and marketing in domestic media, especially in the Kazakh language, still require more extensive study. And, in this regard, the expected result for the chosen subject matter is also extensive. First and foremost, the media should look at the conventional management format and marketing system in a new way. As a result of the research, the authors of the study propose to introduce the best practices of foreign media in Kazakh publications (Chamberlain, 2018). It is also proposed to identify priority areas of media management and media marketing, and create conditions for the development of a special textbook for training new media managers and specialists in higher education institutions (Brüggemann et al., 2016; Atabekova, 2019).

Management and marketing in the media play a crucial role. Management is the art of administration, organisation, methods, and means. At the same time, marketing involves resource monitoring, planning, organisation of the analysis system (Olsen and Solvoll, 2018). In general, management and marketing are similar, closely related concepts. In this regard, the purpose of the study is to investigate modern Kazakh management and marketing in comparison with world best practices (Wadbring and Bergström, 2017; Sadykov et al., 2014). In addition, the purpose involves proposals of the best examples of management in the global information space; identification of the best media brands, analysis of the operation of Kazakh newspapers and offer of methods for their effective management, adaptation to the market and strengthening competitiveness.

2. Materials and methods

The methodological framework of this study included the theoretical methods of scientific cognition. In this study, methods of information synthesis and analysis were applied, a comparative method, a method of system data analysis, and a theoretical analysis of literature sources on the subject matter was carried out. Methods of information synthesis and analysis were used for the rating of the popularity of the Kazakh mass media. In the course of the study, the most popular printed publications were considered, such as "Egemen Kazakhstan", "Business Kazakhstan", "Risk Business" and "Uba-Inform". Using the method of information synthesis, the available information on these publications was considered.

The comparative method was used to compare the Kazakh media. Using the comparative method, the similarities and differences between the Kazakh mass media presented were determined. Namely, a comparative analysis of the printed publications "Egemen Kazakhstan", "Business Kazakhstan", "Risk Business" and "Uba-Inform" was carried out. The method of system data analysis was also applied. The method of system data analysis was used to analyse the mass media registered in the Republic of Kazakhstan as of 2020. Information on registered mass media is presented in the form of tables and figures.

To obtain more reliable information about the level of popularity and relevance of the Kazakh media, a survey was conducted among the residents of Kazakhstan. All survey participants periodically buy print media or subscribe to them. Residents of the Republic of Kazakhstan took part in the survey. The respondents included both men and women. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 60 years. The survey participants were representatives of different social strata. The participants included students, teachers, entrepreneurs, doctors, and representatives of military structures, designers working in the beauty industry, cooks, unemployed residents, and pensioners. A total of 100 people took part in the survey, of which 46 were women and 54 were men.

The survey consisted of three questions: "How often do you buy the press?", "How satisfied are you with the quality and information component of the content of periodicals?", "What content would you like to see on the pages of your favourite publication?". For the first question, respondents were given three possible answers: "Monthly", "Once or twice a week", "Once a week or once every few weeks". To the second question, the following answers were offered: "Fully satisfied", "Partially satisfied", "Completely dissatisfied". The third question had the following answers: "News and other information of an informative nature about the events of Kazakhstan and the world", "Entertainment content", "Information about the business environment".

In the final section of the study, an analysis of scientific articles on the subject matter is carried out. Several scientific papers were analysed that cover the issues of marketing and management in the mass media. The study analyses the practice of Kazakh newspapers. Such as: "Egemen Kazakhstan", "Business Kazakhstan", "Risk Business" and "Uba-Inform". The study considered the practice of world printed publications, the best examples of management in the global information space; the best media trends are identified, the analysis of the work of Kazakh newspapers is carried out, as well as methods of their effective management, adaptation to the market and strengthening of competitiveness are proposed.

3. Results

3.1 Management and marketing of foreign and Kazakh mass media

Media marketing is a special type of activity focused on the study of the media market, obtaining, analysing and actively using the information necessary for the functioning of the media, optimising the product presented by the media in the media market and meeting the information needs and desires of information consumers, that is, the media audience (Ali, 2016). Thus, there are three main goals in media marketing: 1) meeting the information needs and requirements of the audience; 2) creating conditions for the promotion of the newspaper in the market; 3) ensuring the financing and normal existence of the periodical (Villi and Hayashi, 2017; Serdali et al., 2016; Kyzdarbekova et al., 2014).

Foreign media often resort to the use of certain marketing strategies and management techniques both to optimise the work and to increase the audience. Many of the foreign media prefer to use a variety of prizes and other incentives to attract new and retain old customers. An example is the activity of a Turkish newspaper (Evens and Van Damme, 2016). The management of this publication used raffles to attract a new readership (Sjøvaag, 2016). Other Turkish periodicals have also adopted this practice, and today almost every Turkish magazine or newspaper places special coupons or certificates on its pages. By cutting out such a coupon, the reader receives a free set of dishes, a bicycle, an encyclopaedia, a calculator, or other promotional gifts (Chyi and Tenenboim, 2016; Kruzhilko et al., 2020; Mishchenko et al., 2021). Using such methods of promotion, publishers lose next to nothing, since many companies that produce certain goods and services are ready to provide publishers with goods and services for free in return for placing advertisements about their products on the pages of periodicals (Virta and Nando, 2017; Savon et al., 2019).

However, the most enterprising publishers find an even shorter route to attracting an audience. For example, the newspaper "Yeni Ufuk" doubled its circulation, using the campaign to fight AIDS. It mailed condoms to all its readers. Everyone who bought one newspaper was given one pack of contraceptives, and the subscribers were sent condoms depending on the number of days they were subscribed for (Horst and Järventie-Thesleff, 2016; Israfilov et al., 2020). In the struggle for the reader, newspapers actively use such means as drawing various prizes, holding contests, lotteries, quizzes. Thus, interactive methods are used to attract readers to the content of the newspaper, so that everyone feels that this is their newspaper, it is created for them and that they can take part in this process.

One of the most successful marketing strategies is the marketing strategy of the American edition of the New York Times. From the very beginning, The New York Times believed that investing in better journalism would ensure the loyalty of a large and readable audience, which in turn would increase the revenue required to support the newspaper's ambitions. To balance these trade-offs and achieve the goals set, one needs every employee to contribute and the dedication of the entire company to development, experimentation, and training. The management of The New York Times also notes that this requires a single focus on the needs of its readers (Memo on the strategy..., 2021).

Some market publications have a strong reputation, such as the American Wall Street Journal and the British Financial Times, and allow charging a subscription fee for online versions. Open access pages include a much smaller percentage of content than those available by online subscription (Céstino and Matthews, 2016). At the same time, digital programmes for tabloid press (Vogue, ELLE, Mens health, Bazaar, etc.) also provide paid subscription. In other words, one can view content only by subscribing to the paid version (Ladson and Lee, 2017; Zhang et al., 2020).

As of 2020, 3.328 mass media outlets are registered in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Of these, 2.709 are registered as periodicals. In addition, 128 TV channels and 70 radio stations are registered on the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan. In Kazakhstan, there are also 340 news agencies and online publications registered (Figure 1).

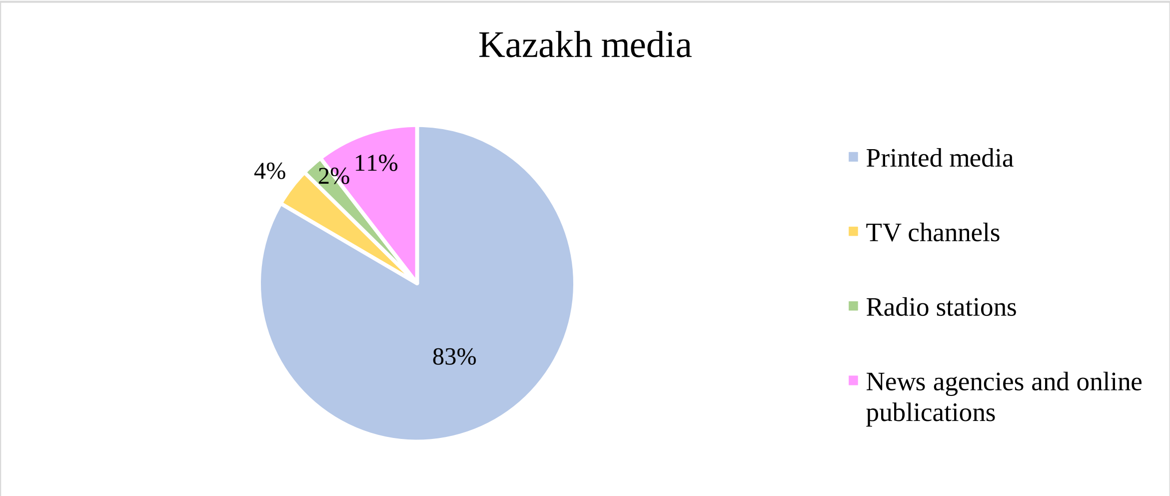

Figure 1. Mass media of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The largest group remains the press, namely print media – 2.790 (or 83.8%) of the total number of registered, including newspapers – 1.800 and magazines – 990. As of January 15, 2019, 225 foreign TV and radio stations were registered in the media register. According to the country, there are 161 Russian TV channels, 15 channels from the United States, 16 from Estonia, 20 from the United Kingdom, 6 from France, and 1 TV channel from Cyprus.

A rating of Kazakhstan's print media was published on one of the advertising platforms. Below are the 4 most popular print media in Kazakhstan. The selected rating is one of the few where regional printed publications of Kazakhstan were also considered. Publications are automatically added to the rating after they are included in the database. Currently, the rating represents more than 6,000 newspapers and magazines, making it the largest project in Runet that contains data on the regional press. Table 1 demonstrates the four most popular print media in Kazakhstan (Rating of print media..., 2021).

Table 1. Media Popularity Rating

Title	City	Printed copies
Egemen Kazakhstan	Nur-Sultan	193,070
Business Kazakhstan	Almaty	11,000
Risk Business	Kokshetau	9,000
Uba-Inform	Shemonaiha	5,000

According to the media popularity rating for 2021, "Egemen Kazakhstan" is one of the most popular publications in Kazakhstan. This publication is a Republican national newspaper, which has been published since December 17, 1919 in the Kazakh language. The newspaper is published five times a week, namely, on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. The newspaper is distributed in all regions of Kazakhstan. This publication provides advertising and information services in Kazakh, Russian, and English. By subject, this publication can be classified as an information publication. As Table 1 demonstrates, the number of printed copies in circulation of the newspaper amounts to 193.070 copies. Notably, the publication is distributed mainly on the subscription basis.

Next up is the publication "Business Kazakhstan", which is a weekly newspaper of national significance, which covers the main events that took place during the week in Kazakhstan and abroad. By subject, this newspaper can be attributed to the group of business newspapers. The number of printed copies in circulation for this newspaper amounts to 11.000 copies. The main distribution of the newspaper is through the sale of copies in retail outlets. The newspaper "Risk Business" is a weekly regional business newspaper. Each issue of the newspaper contains business information, some private ads, a TV programme on 40 channels, crosswords, jokes, horoscopes, as well as advertising blocks. Risk Business is a business newspaper with a circulation of 9.000 copies, which are published every week. The main distribution of the publication is through the subscription of readers. Uba-Inform is also a popular print publication. This is the district's weekly information and advertising newspaper, which is published every Wednesday. This edition, unlike the previous ones, is an entertainment newspaper. The number of printed copies in circulation for this newspaper amounts to 5.000 copies. The publication is distributed both by subscription and by selling at retail outlets.

The main problems of the media in Kazakhstan are presented in Figure 2. Many researchers note that one of the main problems of management and development of the Kazakh media is the legislative framework (Baigozhina et al., 2019). The state information procurement also constitutes a substantial issue. The low level of remuneration and the low professional level of journalists are also important factors. Together, all of these factors have led to a low level of trust in the media.

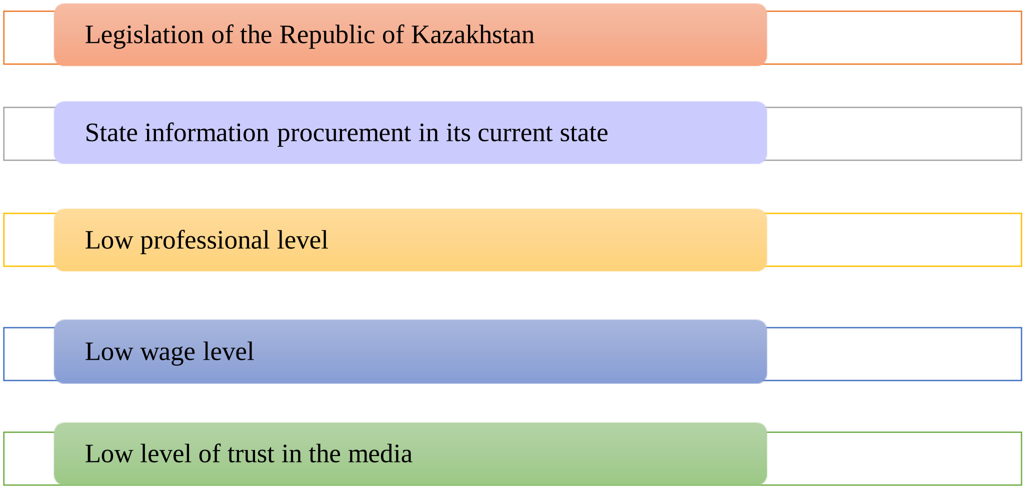

Figure 2. The main problems of Kazakh media

Having considered the most significant issues in the field of management, it is important to note that the problem of the media in Kazakhstan should be considered at the national level. At present, one of the most important tools for attracting and retaining readers has become direct marketing, through which the intended audience is sent emails with informational or advertising letters. Most subscribers are invited to take part in the winning lottery. Usually, the main prize is a free subscription for the next year. Due to the new media and its advantages, namely, virality and immediate transmission of messages to the audience – feedback and reader reviews arrive much faster. Unlike printed newspapers and magazines, electronic publications, blogs, and websites are less influenced by the state, and therefore news reaches readers almost without censorship, which is usually impossible for the mainstream media (Holm, 2016). This created a resonant wave of attracting the audience to the political, social, and economic life of the country and gave a considerable impetus to the further development of the information society. There are also some problems in the marketing of printed periodicals in Kazakhstan. Some of the publications are not particularly popular among the public, and therefore, suppliers of goods and services do not buy advertising from them (Myllylahti, 2017). This leads to the fact that the publications simply do not have enough funding, which in turn leads to the main problems of the Kazakh media, which have already been addressed.

3.2 Analysis of the survey results

To obtain more reliable information about the level of popularity and relevance of the Kazakh media, a survey was conducted among the residents of Kazakhstan. All survey participants periodically buy print media or subscribe to them. Figures 3-5 demonstrate the results of the survey.

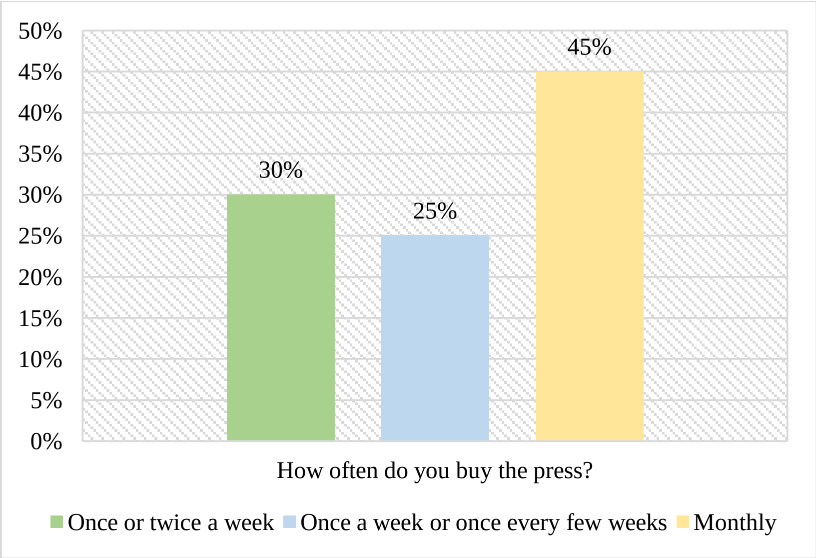

Figure 3. Respondents' answers to the question: "How often do you buy the press?"

To the question: "How often do you buy the press?" most of the respondents, namely 45% of all respondents, said that they buy printed publications about once a month. Fewer respondents (30%) purchase printed publications once or twice a week. Finally, the smallest number of respondents (25%) said that they purchase printed publications once a week or once every few weeks.

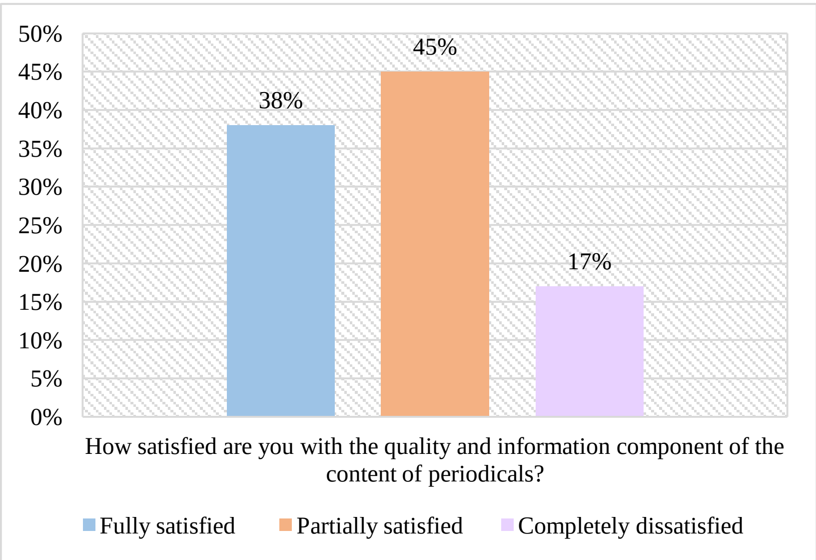

Figure 4. Respondents' answers to the question: "How satisfied are you with the quality and information component of the content of periodicals?"

To the question: "How satisfied are you with the quality and information component of the content of periodicals?" 38% of respondents replied that they are completely satisfied, 45% of respondents said that they are only partially satisfied with the quality of the content and information component. And only 17% of respondents are completely dissatisfied.

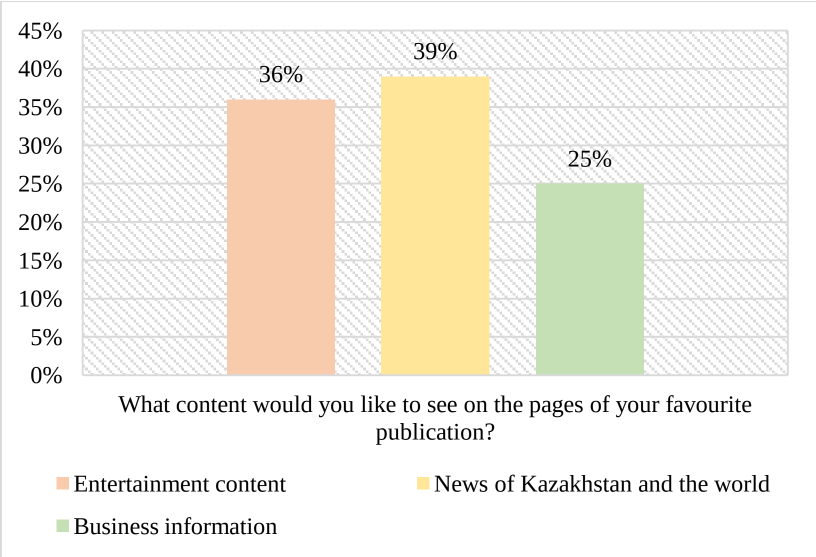

Figure 5. Respondents' answers to the question: "What content would you like to see on the pages of your favourite publication?"

According to the information received during the survey of respondents, the majority of residents of Kazakhstan (39%) prefer to see news and other information about the events in Kazakhstan and the world on the pages of magazines. A smaller part (36%) prefers to see entertainment content on the pages of their favourite publication. The smallest part of respondents (25%) would prefer to see information about the business environment on the pages of publications.

Thus, after analysing the responses of the respondents, some conclusions on the improvement of the work of the media in Kazakhstan can be drawn. To increase sales and subscriptions to publications, it is necessary to increase the level of content satisfaction. For this, one can try introducing new categories, highlighting more relevant events, etc. It is also important to consider how often readers buy periodicals. Namely, that most readers purchase issues once a month. Perhaps publishers should think about a rarer release of publications, but with the subsequent introduction of a higher-quality content. It is also important to take into account the preferences of readers on the subject of publications. The majority of respondents were interested in entertainment content and information about events in the world and in Kazakhstan. On the contrary, information about the business industry is of interest to a limited number of readers.

4. Discussion

Many researchers have considered marketing and management issues for the media. Below, the study examines some of the presented scientific studies. Kolo (2019) analysed the newspaper industries in their national context and identified strategic clusters of similar problems caused by digital transformation and socio-economic changes. The author notes that while media growth in general, newspaper coverage, and Internet penetration constitute the dominant factors determining the prosperity of newspaper publications, the dynamics of digital advertising revenue and circulation still differ substantially within such clusters. Only in very few countries do publishers manage to combine growing total revenues with advanced digital transformation (Kolo, 2019).

Björkroth, Grönlund (2018) review the newspaper publishing industry in Europe. The authors note that it is currently undergoing a transition period and faces serious challenges related to the increasing role of the Internet and the associated changes in media consumption habits. The authors note that Europe is a region where Internet use is not only at a relatively high level, which is likely to affect the publication of newspapers. This study analyses the development and determinants of profitability of newspaper publishing sectors in 12 European markets. It is demonstrated that the average profitability of newspaper publications varies both depending on the country and over time. The econometric assessment supports the claim that the difference between price and cost can be explained not only by the growing spread of the Internet, but also by factors reflecting economies of scale and the degree of competitive pressure (Björkroth, Grönlund, 2018).

The authors of the next study note that recently, the Internet and digitisation, along with large news and information companies, have undermined the business models of conventional newspaper companies and raised serious concerns about the future viability of the print newspaper industry. This study presents a theoretical standpoint, supported by empirical data from the newspaper industry, regarding the way well-known corporate entrepreneurs influence the introduction of innovations in the business model and the way such adoption affects the performance of the business model. The authors found that autonomy, risk, and proactivity do have positive associations with the degree of adoption of disruptive innovations in business models. Furthermore, the breakthrough implementation of innovations in the business model has a non-linear relationship with the effectiveness of the business model. In the final part, the authors discuss the theoretical implications of the study and provide strategies that entrepreneurs and technology managers can use to adjust their corporate entrepreneurship in their efforts to successfully implement innovative disruptive business models (Karimi and Walter, 2016).

The authors of the next study note that the theoretical foundations of the concept of business model remain underdeveloped and empirical research can be focused on the specific context of the innovative business model in individual media organisations. "Detailed case studies of media organisations with different value propositions, market strategies, or revenue models can expand our understanding of the innovative business model and explore the interrelation between organisational flexibility and competitiveness" (Evens et al., 2017).

Fletcher and Nielsen investigated the issue of private media outlets around the world trying to develop models for paying for news. However, the authors' understanding of what drives behaviour and attitudes towards paying for news online is narrow. The authors used survey data from six countries (France, Germany, Japan, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States) to investigate three hypotheses: those who use state-owned media for online news are less likely to pay because they have a zero-reference price for online news. The second hypothesis: those who pay for print newspapers are more likely to pay or express a willingness to pay for online news because they have a reference price above zero for offline news. Third hypothesis: young people are more likely to pay or express a willingness to pay for online news because they are more likely to have the above reference price for other digital content. The authors' analysis supports hypotheses 2 and 3, but not hypothesis 1. Thus, paying for offline news increases the probability of paying for online news, as it helps to create a reference price above zero. However, the use of free online news from state-owned media does not in itself create a zero-reference price for online news (Fletcher and Nielsen, 2017).

5. Conclusions

It is extremely important to properly plan the management policy and marketing strategy in the modern competitive market environment. In the information age, the media (mass media) must adapt to the changing habits and needs of the current audience. Management and marketing in the media play a crucial role. Management is the art of administration, organisation, methods, and means. At the same time, marketing involves resource monitoring, planning, organisation of the analysis system. In general, management and marketing are similar, closely related concepts. In this regard, the purpose of the study was to investigate modern Kazakh management and marketing in comparison with world best practices. As a result of the study, the intended purpose was achieved.

The study analyses the practice of Kazakh newspapers. Such as: "Egemen Kazakhstan", "Business Kazakhstan", "Risk Business" and "Uba-Inform". The study considered the practice of world printed publications, the best examples of management in the global information space; the best media trends are identified, the analysis of the work of Kazakh newspapers is carried out, as well as methods of their effective management, adaptation to the market and strengthening of competitiveness are proposed. The study investigated the main problems of the Kazakh media.

To obtain more reliable information about the level of popularity and relevance of the Kazakh media, a survey was conducted among the residents of Kazakhstan. All survey participants periodically buy print media or subscribe to them. Residents of the Republic of Kazakhstan took part in the survey. The survey consisted of three questions: "How often do you buy the press?", "How satisfied are you with the quality and information component of the content of periodicals?", " What content would you like to see on the pages of your favourite publication?". For the first question, respondents were given three possible answers: "Monthly", "Once or twice a week", "Once a week or once every few weeks". To the second question, the following answers were offered: "Fully satisfied", "Partially satisfied", "Completely dissatisfied". The third question had the following answers: "News and other information of an informative nature about the events of Kazakhstan and the world", "Entertainment content", "Information about the business environment".

In general, having analysed the existing scientific studies, it can be concluded that the issue of marketing and management in the media is understudied. This subject requires further investigation and scientific research.

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